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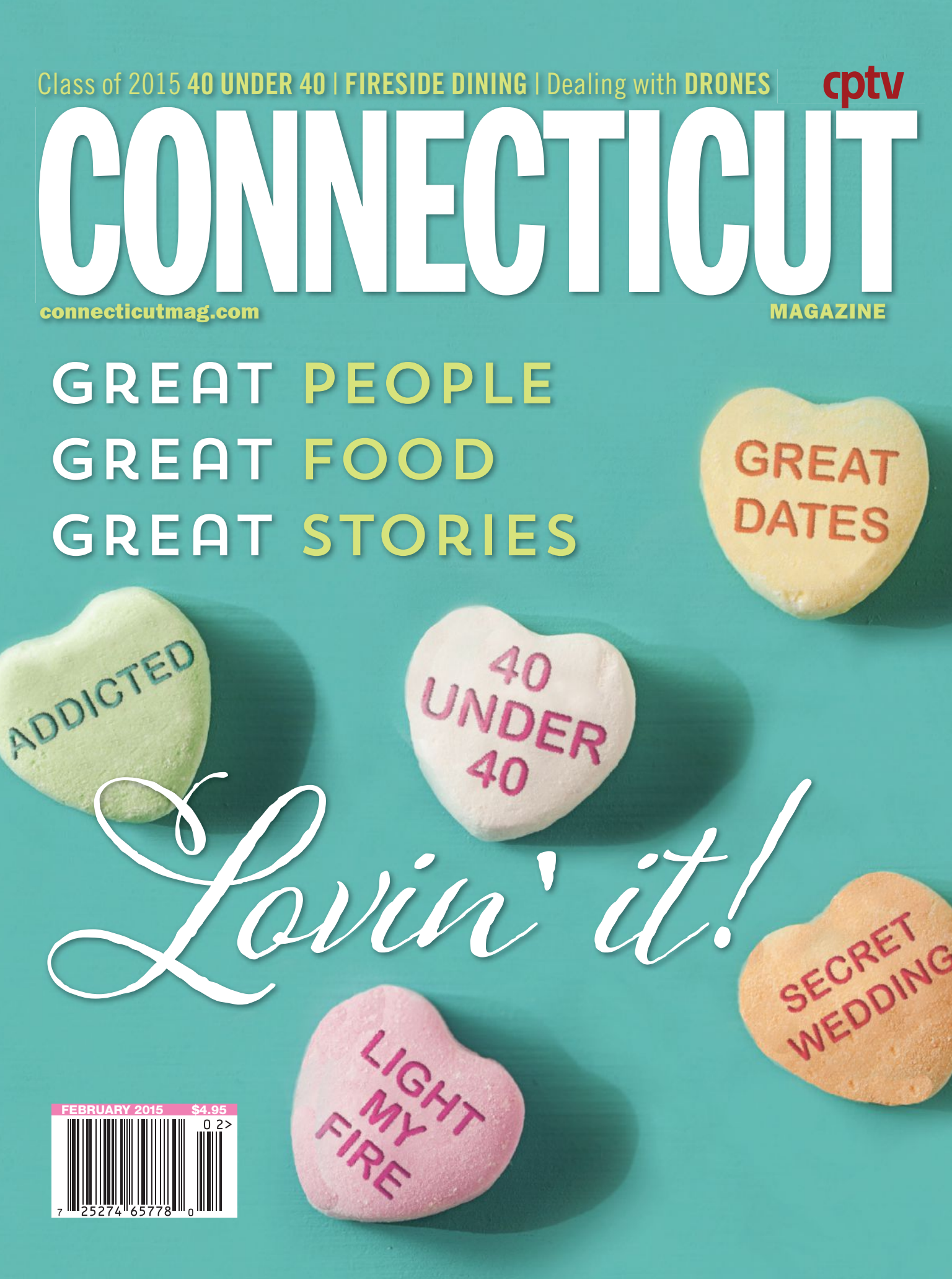

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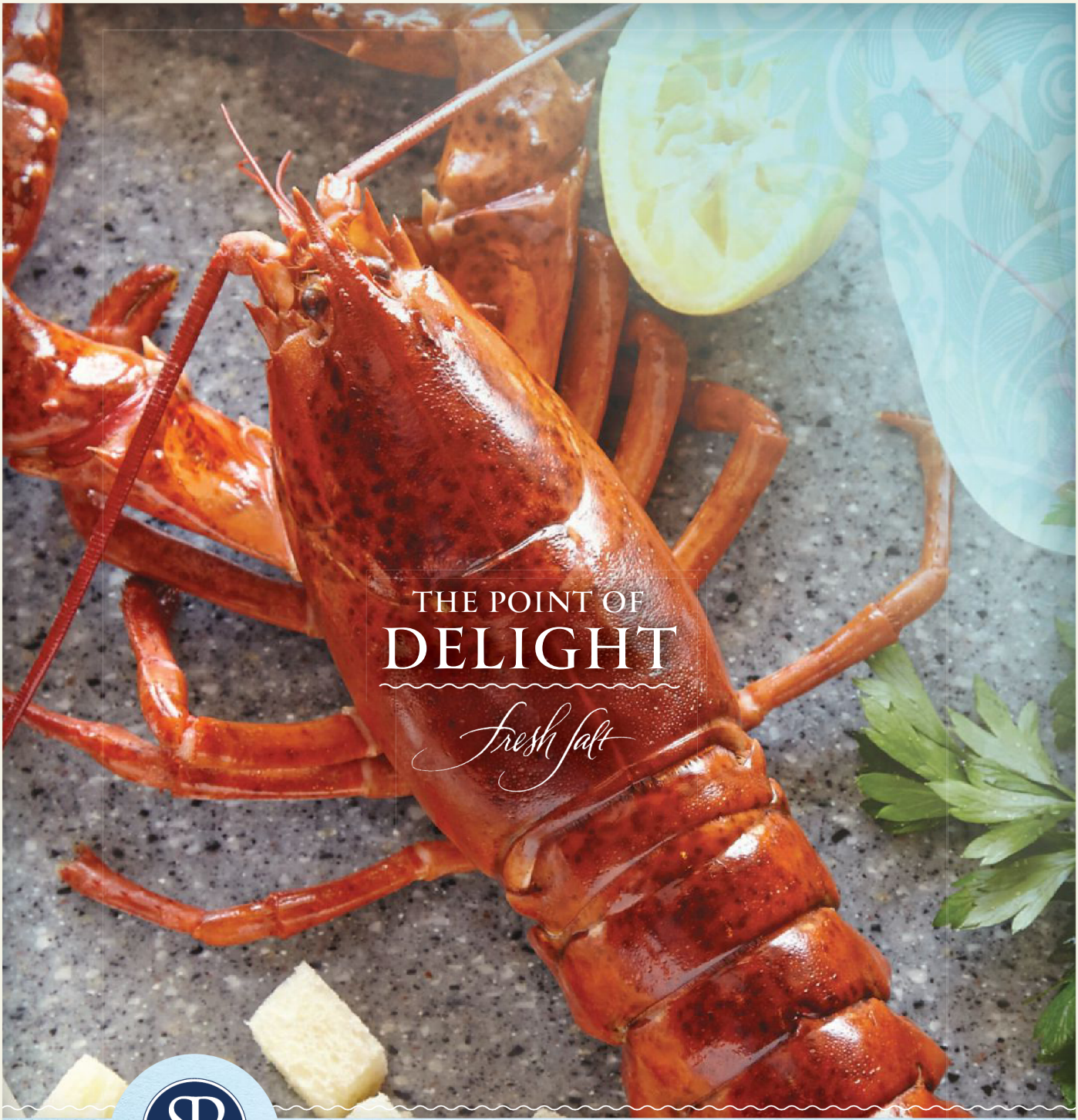

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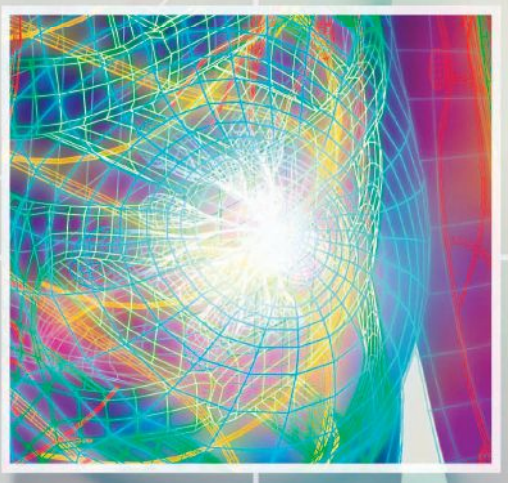

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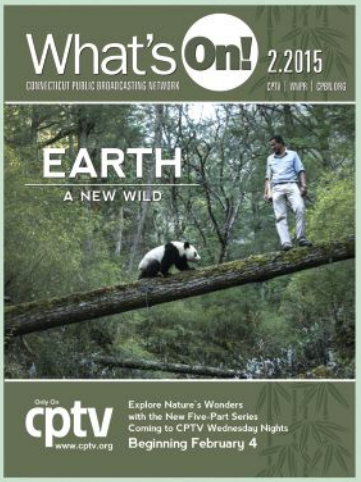

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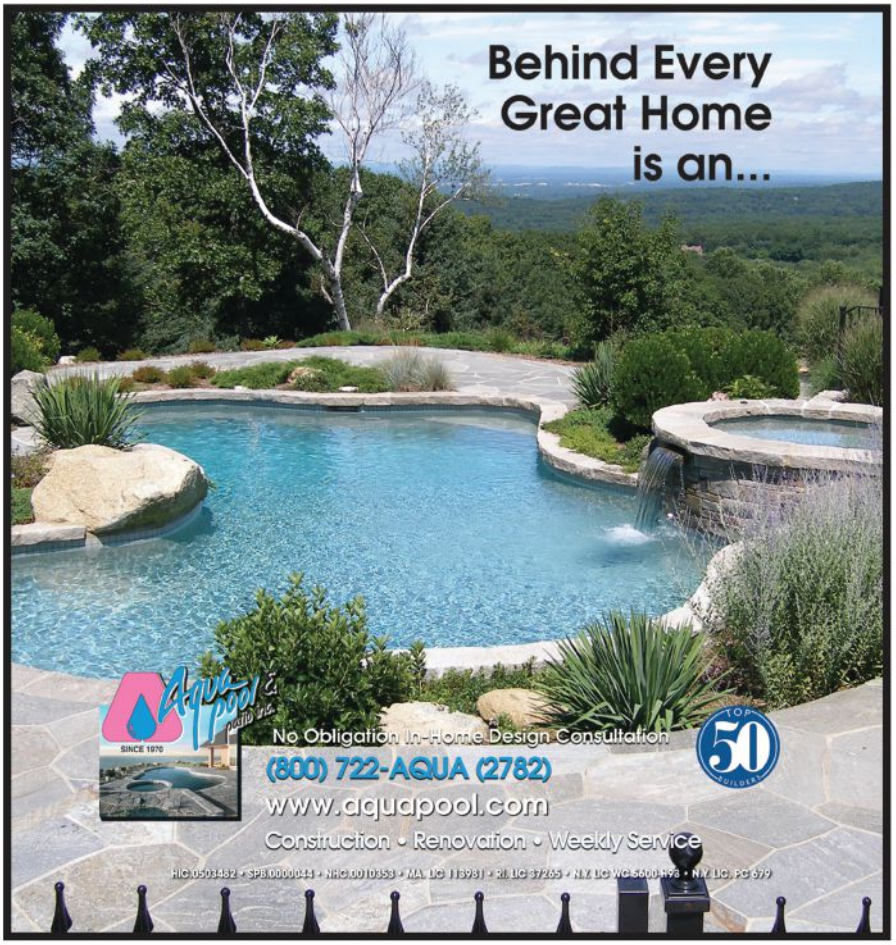
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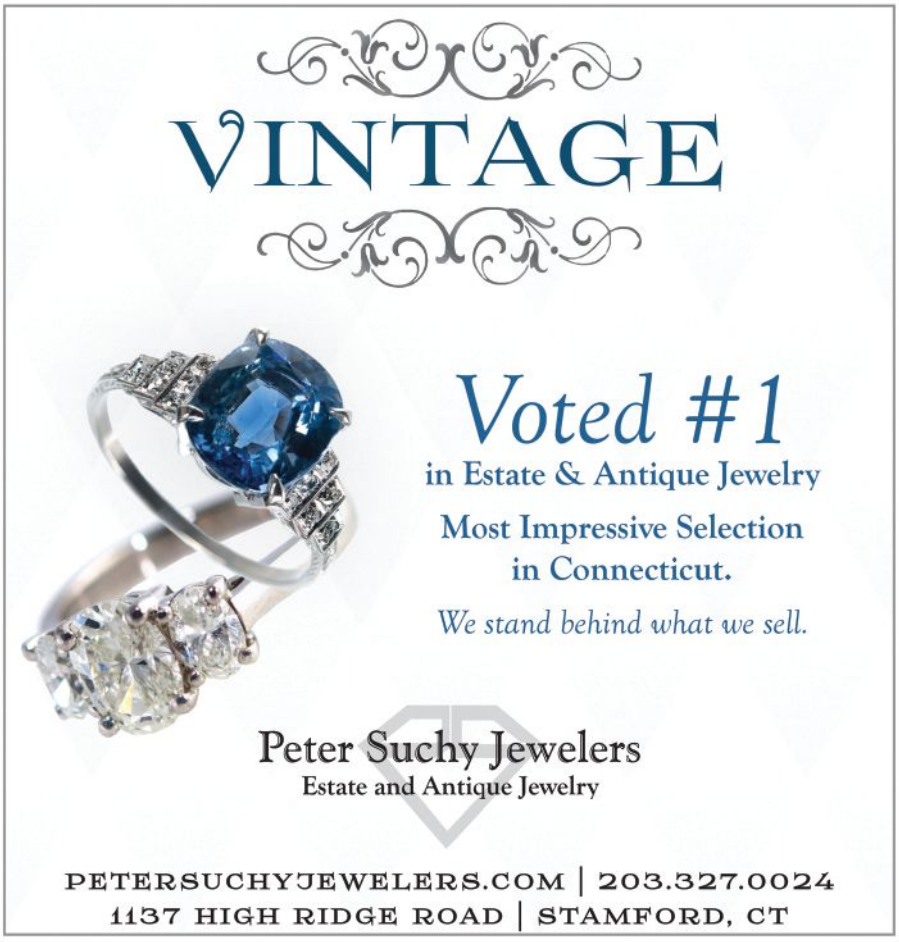

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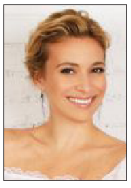

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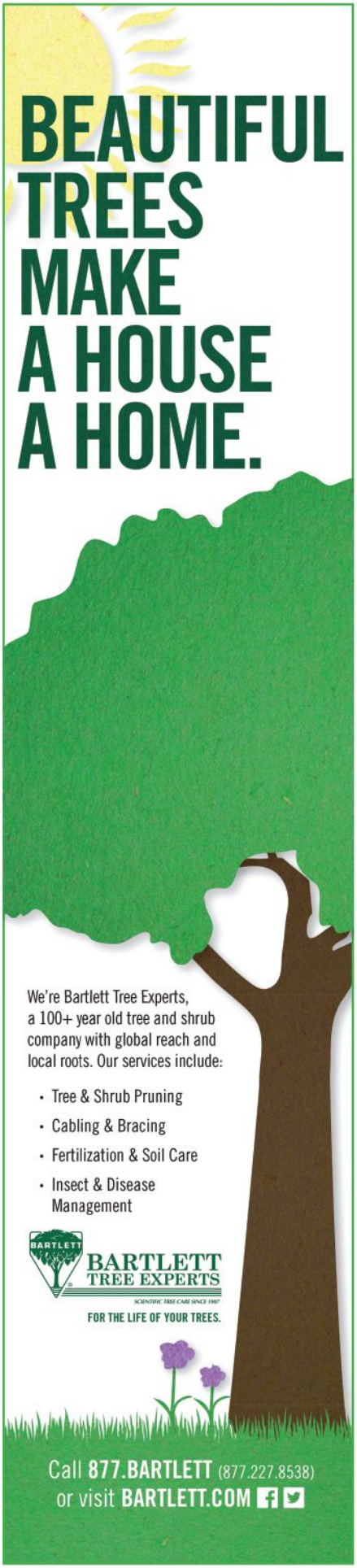
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| from the editors |

Romance Is In (Our Pages)

Let's be honest for a minute. February is the most unpleasant month of the year, like the Grinch of the Gregorian calendar: cold, unattractive and—given winter's penchant for getting its proverbial money's worth before it wanes—unpredictable enough to spoil anyone's plans with a Nor'easter. Even the word February (said to derive from an old-Italian god, Februus, or from februa, meaning Roman festivals of purification) scrapes off the tongue like a cheese grater.

In this issue, we're pushing back against all of that. Inspired by the fact that Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year, we offer opportunities for romance in ways that just can't happen on most other days of the week. While we can't, strictly speaking, spin our "40 Under 40" feature as part of the romance package, it's safe to assume that the folks in this year's class of young, high-achieving Connecticut residents will be making Cupid's legacy as special as they make every other day.

Our "flames of passion" come in many varieties, including a feature on celebrity chef Robert Irvine, the star of an event coming to Hartford this spring—Savor, A Celebration of Wine, Food & Spirits. His passion is helping military families through philanthropic efforts.

And love will certainly be in the air on the eve of Valentine's Day when Audra McDonald, the acclaimed Broadway star, performs at UConn.

But those stories are mere appetizers for our main courses.

In one we offer inspiration for great dates that take place in different ways and in different parts of the state, with all of them including suggestions for overnight stays (to keep the romance going, given how the February calendar makes extending Valentine's Day a natural). Take our advice and you'll enjoy great art, shopping and dining in New Haven, for example, or a brisk old-fashioned sleigh ride through the Connecticut countryside, or a more urbane experience that wraps in enjoying the Big Apple from a scenic and convenient base on the water in Greenwich.

For those who want a special experience that's not so ambitious, our dining section glows with a story on restaurants where you can enjoy the state's best fireside dining. There are more than you might think, and wherever you live, at least one within easy driving distance.

Even something as powerful as love needs to be balanced by variety, so also look for our feature that is seemingly the antithesis of romance—the clandestine wedding of famed aviatrix Amelia Earhart in Noank. There are also stories on a groundbreaking treatment for addiction (too much love?), the growing aerial drone issue and one of the biggest financial scandals of the 20th century.

Happy reading by the fire, and enjoy the discoveries you make with our help!

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voices

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Our readers select 70 winners in 35 categories, plus dining experts share more than 200 terrific spots.

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reader letters

Best Restaurants

I always look forward to the Readers' Choice restaurant survey. However, it seems in the past you used to list the best categories by county as well as state overall. With all the results being on a statewide basis this year, practically all the choices were in the area of greatest population, mainly New Haven, Hartford and Fairfield Counties, which of course then resulted in more votes.

I hope in the future you will go back to tabulating by county. We live in New London county and had very little representation, although there are many fine restaurants here.

John E. Dreslin
Stonington

I was going to write you to complain a bit about how little New London County is represented in your "Best Restaurants" feature because each year it seems like no restaurants are from this area are mentioned.

However, I ended up doing a little math, and realized that we're represented fine.

New London County has about 6.4 percent of the population of Connecticut, and the restaurants from New London County received 11 mentions out of 219 from your readers and experts, which is 5.0 percent. (Full disclosure: I only counted once—219 may be off by one or two.)

Not too far off, I decided. So, there's some math for when you get similar complaints from your readers.

Now, one restaurant was mentioned twice and two restaurants were from tribal nations that happen to be in New London County, so maybe you could show the county just a BIT more love in the future.

Dave Berge,
via email

How can Goodfellas restaurant be the "Most Romantic" when it is loud, fairly bright and the TV is continually showing the movie of the same name?

In my mind, a romantic restaurant is a place with low lighting, candles on the tables & soft music in the background.

Roslyn Eisner
via email

Great Place to Work?

With Aetna being chosen as a great place to work, ["Great Places to Work," November 2014] I can't help but question who or where this came from. As stated in "Our Selection Process:" "One person might rave about the size of the paycheck, another loves having on site daycare." Yes, Aetna has a beautiful campus and one of the largest cafeterias in the country, along with the Wellness Center and Fitness Center. However, with the CEO and president's incomes in the millions, keep in mind that many employees haven't had a raise in over three years. Benefits have also been reduced. Aetna offers its customers better benefits than their own employees.

A reminder that a couple of years ago Aetna also permanently took away one week of vacation from all employees with more than 25 years. Why would you do that to your loyal employees?

I think there might have been a different result if your research had been through the "core" employees, where the morale is so very low.

Name withheld by request

Still Following the Money

In response to the letter writer who is planning to cancel her subscription to *Connecticut Magazine* ("Following the Money," December 2014) because of the magazine's alleged bias, I am planning to renew my subscription.

May I suggest to the lady from the Gold Coast that she donate the twenty bucks she saved to a soup kitchen in New Haven, or better yet, come on down herself and experience life on the bottom rungs of the ladder.

Vin Marottoli
New Haven

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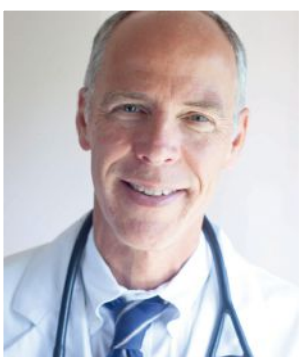

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Dealing with Drones

THE LEGISLATURE BEGINS TO CONSIDER NEW LAWS REGARDING THE USE OF AERIAL DRONES.

The next wave of drones rise: Developers Jelena Jovanovic and Christoph Kohstall and Intel Corp. CEO Brian Krzanich launch the Nixie wearable drone camera at the 2015 International CES in Las Vegas, Nevada.

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

This coming session, the Connecticut General Assembly will likely consider drone legislation with language that just a few years ago would have seemed ripped from a bad science fiction script.

"The technology is moving faster than the law and our committee is trying to address that gap and get something in place to protect people's privacy and safety to the extent that we can," says Rep. Mary Mushinsky, D-Wallingford, who is co-chair of the Programs Review and Investigations Committee, which recently investigated possible drone legislation.

As politicians scramble to legally address the increasingly popular unmanned flying devices, terms such as "drone voyeurism" and "drone surveillance," have become a part of the state's political vernacular and drones have become a more common sight in Connecticut skies. In 2014, sales of consumer drones rose dramatically across the country and they were a popular Christmas present. In December, Bloomberg.com reported Amazon was selling more than 10,000 drones a month on average.

Drone enthusiast Peter Sachs of Branford says that some have called 2014 "The Year of The Drone" but "it's a little premature to say that because 2015 is going to be 'The Year of The Drone' and the next decade is going to be 'The Decade of The Drone.' They're just going to get more and more popular at this point."

That's part of the reason why the current legislative session is expected to be an important one for laws regarding unmanned aircraft in Connecticut.

What the state can do

When it comes to drone regulations Connecticut, or any state, has a fairly limited scope of authority. The Federal Aviation Administration oversees air traffic and has jurisdiction that preempts state law when it comes to drones. "[However] we can regulate the state's usage and local law enforcement usage," explains Mushinsky.

What that usage might look like is the focus of a recent report prepared by the staff of the Programs Review and Investigations Committee. The committee approved most of the suggestions in the report and some type of drone legislation based on its findings is expected to be written and voted on before June. The report examined criminal statutes in relation to drones, called for making it illegal to use weapons with a drone and laid out guidelines for police use of drone surveillance. The report, which will be used to craft proposed legislation, was mostly praised by both drone and privacy advocates, but there were some areas of concern.

The report concluded existing criminal statutes would cover most crimes committed with drones, advice Sachs applauds. "I don't think you need to add the word's 'with a drone' into our existing voyeurism statutes," he says. "[For instance] you're either peeping or you're not. It doesn't really matter what you're peeping with. If I were to fly my drone up to somebody's window with the intent to peep inside to see somebody in a state of undress, for example, it would already be covered by existing voyeurism statute as long as my intent is to do it for sexual gratification and it meets all the other elements of that particular crime."

However, there is a possibility drone-specific wording will be added to some of Connecti-

| CONTINUED ON **PAGE 15** |

The Rebirth of the *Mayflower II*

THE HISTORIC SHIP HAS ARRIVED AT MYSTIC SEAPORT TO UNDERGO A MUCH-NEEDED RESTORATION.

I'm inside the belly of the boat on the *Mayflower II* and the first thing that strikes me is just how cramped it is. I'm 5'10", but here on the mid deck, below the main deck and above the cargo hold, I have to crouch. As the ship's captain Whit Perry shows me around, I bump my head several times.

The mid deck is only a few feet below the sunshine, air and open water views found on the top deck, but it may as well be miles away. Even though it's lit by electric lights, it is still a subterranean lair of wood and shadow that helps peel back the layers of time. Standing in the space, it's hard to imagine an extended stay down here. It's even harder to imagine spending months here, in rough seas, when the deck is filled beyond capacity with 102 passengers. However, that's what happened when the original Mayflower set sail from England in 1620 on a harrowing, 66-day voyage.

Built in the 1950s, the *Mayflower II* is a modern recreation of that vessel and a powerful symbol of the American immigrant dream. In late December it arrived in Mystic Seaport, from its home port in Plymouth—where it is operated by the Plimoth Plantation—for the first step in a multiphase restoration project that will begin this winter and continue off and on for the next four years until 2020 and the 400th anniversary of the *Mayflower* voyage. In Mystic, the public will be able to see the ship at various stages during its restoration with the plan for guests at the Seaport to be able to board it later this month.

The Henry B. duPont Preservation Shipyard at Mystic Seaport will oversee the ship's restoration. The process is part of a major collaboration between Mystic Seaport and Plimoth Plantation, which for the seaport is something of a sequel to the historic voyage of the *Charles W. Morgan*, which took place last summer and saw the last wooden whaleship return to sea for the first time in decades on a tour of New England ports.

The *Mayflower II* last sailed in March when documentary filmmaker Ric Burns shot footage of the vessel under sail for his upcoming PBS documentary, "The Pilgrims," which is scheduled to be broadcast in November 2015. But it has been clear since 2013 that the "new" *Mayflower* was getting old. Inspections that year revealed that the 57-year-old ship was in need of a major refit. Though the boat is generally dry-docked for minor repairs every other winter, for this major restoration, Plimoth Plantation has turned to Mystic Seaport's shipyard, one of the country's most respected.

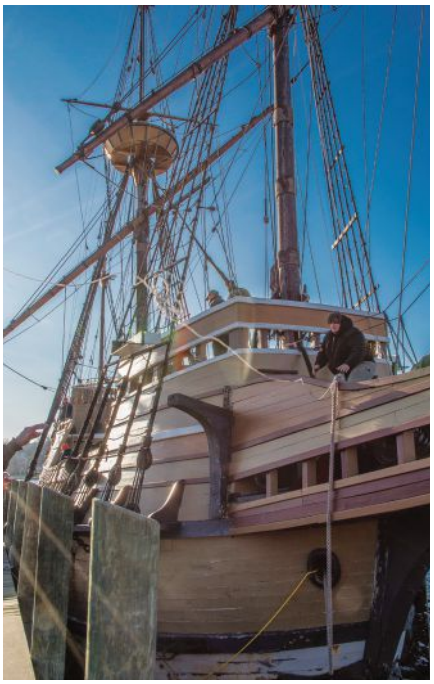
"New England has many wonderful wooden shipyards, but at Mystic Seaport you have that corps of craftspeople who are not only very fine wooden boatyard people but they're unrivaled for their knowledge of historic boats," says Richard Pickering, executive director of Plimoth Plantation.

Pickering is no stranger to the seaport; it was there that Pickering worked while getting his Master's degree at University of Connecticut before beginning his 30-year-plus career at Plimoth Plantation. The *Mayflower II*'s captain, Perry, is also intimately familiar with the seaport. A native of Danbury, Perry was inspired by visiting Mystic Seaport as a kid. When he moved to Massachusetts, he would still stop at the Seaport often while passing through Connecticut. "This is like the holy grail for boat lovers," he says.

After arriving in Mystic Seaport in early December, the ship was hauled out of the water for the beginning of an intensive assessment period. Some repairs were immediately clear—framing and planking below the waterline and several stern posts need to be replaced. Other needs are expected to be identified in the coming days and weeks.

Approximately 100 tons of ballast in the ship's hold was scheduled to be unloaded for the first time since the ship's maiden voyage in 1957. No one was sure what to expect under the ballast. "There is always a process of discovery that goes on in the course of the work," says Quentin Snediker, Mystic Seaport's shipyard director. "From experience you can make certain assumptions about

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MYSTIC SEAPORT



what you'll find and sometimes you're surprised in a positive way and sometimes you're surprised in a negative way but you don't know until you open the package."

In this case "the package" is a 17th-century-style vessel, where the collection at Mystic Seaport focuses on vessels from the late 19th to early 20th century. However, Snediker says the restoration approach does not change. "While the form of the vessel is somewhat different than most of the ships that we focus on in our collection, the techniques of construction are the same, and the materials are essentially the same."

The "voyage" of the ship's restoration will be a slow and careful one. This year the focus will be on assessment and planning. The ship will return to Plymouth in the spring and come back to Mystic Seaport each winter for continued work until 2020.

The *Mayflower II*'s accessibility to the public is another reason Mystic Seaport was selected to handle the restoration. During its repairs people will be able to experience its beauty and learn about its history and the history of the vessel that it recreates.

"The ship, unlike any other ship in American history, is symbolic of that first immigrant in every American's life, unless you are an indigenous American," Pickering says. "The ship is an important part of our national discussion on immigration." | E.O. |

The Education Agenda

Among topics noted by Gov. Dannel P. Malloy in his inauguration and State of the State speeches in January was education. The subject made an appearance in both speeches—both as an accomplishment and an area where Connecticut can lead.

"We've built better schools, raised test scores, made college more affordable, and put Connecticut on a path toward universal pre-kindergarten," Malloy said, addressing the General Assembly for the first time in the 2015 session.

Suggesting there is still more to be done, Malloy's earlier, shorter speech after he took the oath of office, focused on the need to educate Connecticut's children with quality "public schools."

"We all want a better future for our children—strong schools and a great education that takes our kids from pre-kindergarten all the way through college and beyond," he said.

Malloy focused on transportation policy at his State of the State address, whereas in his 2014 speech he went through a list of topics, including education. In that speech, Malloy called for the need to "achieve universal pre-kindergarten."

The governor aims to have more than 4,000 new early childhood slots open by 2019. Last year, Malloy continued to build on the initiative begun in 2013 when he signed an executive order creating the Office of Early Childhood.

Malloy specifically mentioned pre-kindergarten several times during his speeches. It has been a policy initiative proposed first by President Barack Obama, which, like healthcare and raising the minimum wage, Malloy has sought to implement. In December, Connecticut was awarded nearly $12.5 million in federal funding to expand pre-kindergarten across the state. The state has been increasing the number of slots available for low-income children to attend school readiness or public preschool programs each year.

This year, the governor starts out on different footing in education as he will appoint a new education commissioner. Several slots on the State Board of Education are also up for reappointment. The state also likely will grapple with policies about charter schools and further rollout of the Common Core standards.

"Make no mistake, Connecticut is in the midst of an education crisis but one that is solvable," says Jennifer Alexander, CEO of Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now (ConnCAN) and spokesperson for a coalition of education organizations with ties to charter schools, called "For Every Child." The coalition, made up of ConnCAN, Achievement First charter schools, the Northeast Charter School Network and Families for Excellent Schools, a pro-charter lobbying organization, has a mission of urging leaders to provide a "quality education for every child" in the state. The coalition believes charter schools could be one of a group of solutions to fix schools they deem as "failing."

ARNOLD GOLD/NEW HAVEN REGISTER

After being sworn in to his second term in January, Gov. Dannel P. Malloy (left) outlined his goals for education in both his inauguration and State of the State speeches.

The coalition's suggestions for the state—which include appointing a new education commissioner who has skills, experience and "urgency" to fix the state's schools—also feature growing "new and existing charter schools," fixing the state's "broken" education funding formula and funding every child "equitably" no matter what school they attend.

The Rev. Eldren Morrison of Varick Memorial AME Zion Church, who founded the Booker T. Washington charter school in New Haven, says the state has a "grueling" process for charter schools to open. He says while due diligence is needed in opening a school and that he appreciates the state's efforts to provide quality education for students, he thinks the state should embrace the opening of more charter schools as they continue to succeed in helping students.

"The problem is that there are not enough (charters). I think that smaller classroom sizes, maybe even smaller schools, might be one thing that keeps kids from falling through the cracks," Morrison says. "I think that teachers are doing great jobs with where they are with what they have to work with. We just need to make sure that we're putting resources where they're best needed—back in the classrooms."

Alexander says it is still early in the legislative session to have very specific proposals, and that her groups look forward to working with legislators and Malloy to see what is proposed. | JENNIFER SWIFT |

Going Off the Reservation

WITH GAMBLING REVENUES AND VISITORS DECLINING, THE MOHEGAN TRIBE CONTINUES TO DIVERSIFY.

Forget the roulette wheel, please pass the ketchup. The Mohegan Tribe, which operates Mohegan Sun Resort Casino, is adding some flavor to its business portfolio.

In November, the tribe opened the first Connecticut location of the popular chain Smashburger in Waterford. It's also the first restaurant the tribe has opened outside of the resort and casino, but it won't be the last; the tribe is looking to open more restaurants—including 15 more Smashburger locations—in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

"The tribe is branching out into things that aren't about gaming," says Joseph Smith, manager of tribal communications.

In addition to Smashburger, the tribe is opening another franchise restaurant business with Pennsylvania-based Arooga's Grille and Sports Bar. A flagship location for New England is expected to open in March in Uncasville near Mohegan Sun. Outside of the restaurant business, the tribe has established Northeast Wood Products LLC for wood pellets, and Kôta, a partnership for office technology with Long Island-based Leslie Digital Imaging.

"In its first few weeks of operation, Smashburger has gotten off to a great start, and it is shaping up to be a very valuable addition to our portfolio. We're also excited about the projected opening of Arooga's in mid-March," says Tribal Council Chairman Kevin Brown "Red Eagle." "All of these efforts are part of the tribe's broader strategy to enter areas of non-gaming business and to maintain our reputation as one of the best employers and business owners in the state of Connecticut."

In 2014, Mohegan Sun faced the prospect of competing gaming resorts in New York and Massachusetts and made failed bids to open casinos in both states. Not coincidentally, it has been ramping up its non-gaming business ventures.

Last December, the *Hartford Courant* reported the tribe was exploring the possibility of growing legal marijuana on tribal lands, and in January, the tribe brought a professional indoor lacrosse team to Connecticut, the New England Black Wolves. The Black Wolves play home games at Mohegan Sun Arena and are the second professional team the tribe has invested in—it has owned the WNBA's Connecticut Sun since 2003.

In the case of Smashburger, business diversity comes in the form of juicy, burger goodness. Smashburger was founded in Denver in 2007. The company's founder, Tom Ryan, is a guru of mass food marketing and innovation. He's got a Ph.D. in flavor and fragrance chemistry and was the creator of McDonald's McGriddles and Pizza Hut's stuffed crust.

The fast-casual restaurant seeks to offer competition for established giant burger chains such as McDonald's and Burger King. "We want to become the Starbucks of burgers," Ryan told *USA Today* in 2013.

Connecticut's Smashburger is located off the Waterford turnpike in Waterford Commons, a strip mall not too far from Mohegan Sun. When you walk in, it's clear that you're in a franchise, but the place has the feel of a modern chain, like Chipotle or Panera Bread. The burgers are made with certified Angus beef and served on artisan buns.

David McBride, the fast-casual restaurant manager for Mohegan Tribe, explains

The Mohegan Tribe has been expanding its business portfolio to include restaurants such as Waterford's Smashburger and pro sports teams like the indoor lacrosse team, The New England Black Wolves.

COURTESY OF SMASHBURGER

that in addition to the quality of ingredients what makes the Smashburger burgers special is that each burger is "smashed" while being made—the burger starts off as a ball of chuck, which is thrown onto the grill and than smashed with a custom-made spatula that presses it onto the grill. The "smashing" process is supposed to sear the juices so that the burger cooks in its own juices.

In addition to these and other burger options, each Smashburger location has its own local burger combination that is unique to the area. Ryan personally designs the local burger for each location. McBride explains that while thinking about the Waterford burger Ryan noticed "a strong Italian heritage in the area." To honor that heritage, Ryan created the Constitution Smashburger, which features mayo, pesto, giardiniera, tomato slices and provolone, all served on a ciabatta bun.

Beyond the Waterford location, Smashburger is considering a Middletown location and is looking at other areas in Connecticut as well. Outside of the state, the tribe is looking at locations in Rhode Island as well as Springfield and Worcester, Mass. As it looks toward its future in an increasingly crowded gaming market, the Mohegan Tribe seems to be making some good bets. | E.O. |

cut's criminal statutes. "We can probably use existing statutes and just modify them a bit to say 'harassment by use of drone,' or 'stalking by use of drone,'" Mushinsky says. "Personally, I would feel more comfortable if we specified and said 'including by use of a drone.'"

Drone Surveillance and Privacy Concerns

David McGuire, staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut, says on the whole he is pleased with the recommendations made by the committee. "It's a very thoughtful report, there is some really insightful elements to it and overall I think it's a good start." However, McGuire and the ACLU are worried about the suggestions made in the report with regards to law enforcement's use of drone surveillance—an issue that has pitted law enforcement and some drone advocates against privacy advocates.

The Programs Review and Investigations Committee report recommends that police be required to obtain a warrant to use drones for surveillance for an extended period of time in most cases. However, Police would also be able to use drones for up to 24 hours in a 30-day period if they have reasonable suspicion that someone has committed a crime. In legal terms "reasonable suspicion" is a standard of proof that is lower than probable cause and is used when there is not enough evidence to obtain a warrant. "We have a serious concern about that section," McGuire says. "It will allow law enforcement to fly a drone upon a very low reasonable suspicion standard."

Law enforcement agencies do not need a warrant to conduct helicopter or other plain-view surveillance, but McGuire says drones have the capability for more stealth. "It's not like a helicopter or an airplane where you know that there's something above you," he says. "Drones are much smaller, much cheaper and much more maneuverable."

In contrast, Sachs believes that a warrant should not be necessary for surveillance by drones because he says current drones do not have surveillance capabilities above and beyond traditional aircraft. "Drones are not the spying machines that people think they are," he says, pointing out that most commercially available drones can only stay in flight for a short time (usually around 20 minutes to a half hour or so), and that the detail a camera mounted to a drone can pick up from a distance of 200 feet or more is minimal. As drone technology improves, Sachs says this issue might have to be revisited, but "I don't think it is necessary to pass a preemptive statute at this time."

Even if a law were to pass requiring the use of a warrant for drone surveillance, there would still be emergency exceptions where drones could be used, such as to assist in search-and-rescue operations of lost

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

More sophisticated drones—like the Parrot MiniDrone, which is controlled by a smartphone and has removable wheels enabling it to roll on floors, walls or ceilings—may require new legislation.

children, the quick tracking of an escaped felon, to assist in an assessment of a fire, or other similar situations. The committee is also looking at ways to word possible legislation to allow for drone surveillance of large crowds without reasonable suspicion.

Rapid Technology Growth

"We have only seen the tip of the iceberg with the popularity and capabilities of drones," says Alfred Gates, a Central Connecticut State University engineering professor, licensed helicopter pilot and drone builder. "Right now drones are like the big clunky car phone in the early '80s. This technology will rapidly change in the next 5 to 20 years."

He says the technology has advanced at an astonishing rate since he became involved with the community in 2006. He believes this is due to the community of drone builders that has emerged on the Internet. "In the '80s and '90s, the PC evolved at a snail's pace since the hobbyist community did not have a worldwide means of communication and organization," he says. "The Internet provides a means of communication for UAS [Unmanned Aircraft Systems] hobbyists all over the world through chat rooms, blogs, forums and user groups. The hobbyist communities have developed open source autopilot software that will outperform software from the major aerospace companies. Many people worldwide are developing and improving autopilot and sensor algorithms because they enjoy it, which has resulted in some amazing capabilities. This has also happened on the hardware side."

While there are concerns with some of the ways drones can be used to break the law, there is also excitement about the new technology. McGuire says that he and the ACLU are on the side of drone advocates in general and support the new technology.

"We're not calling for a moratorium or trying to prevent this technology from taking hold, we just want to make sure police use it responsibly and don't change the nature of our society," he says. "We're very protective of the public's first amendment right to take photographs and that is essentially what drones are doing." | E.O. |

community

BY KATE HARTMAN

Celebrity chef Robert Irvine met with many active members of the U.S. military during a recent trip to Afghanistan to support Operation H.O.T. (Honoring Our Troops).

THE ORGANIZATION: Robert Irvine Foundation

THE STORY: The military bloodlines of celebrity chef Robert Irvine run deep, beginning back when he served in the culinary unit of the British Royal Navy for ten years. Irvine has always maintained a connection with active duty and retired military personnel, both here and in his native England.

"A lot of the things he does, his whole purpose, is to give back to the troops and support the military," says Dan McLean, director of marketing for Robert Irvine.

As his public profile has grown—as the host of the popular Food Network program "Restaurant Impossible" and celebrity chef know around the globe—Irvine has given back to the military, making it as much a part of his identity as anything else.

This past year, Irvine and his team launched a new nonprofit organization, the Robert Irvine Foundation, as "the centerpiece" for his philanthropic efforts. He has consistently donated to deserving organizations that support the military, but as McLean explains, the foundation is now the place where that money can be pooled, organizations can be researched and donations can be made.

"The goal for the board of directors is to have one director representing each of the services, so we can make sure all of the military branches are recognized," McLean says of the Tampa-based foundation. "The qualifications we're looking for are organizations that are trying to improve quality of life for our troops and their families, on the home front or overseas."

It's a broad mission, "to support individuals and organizations committed to enriching the lives of our military personnel," as the website states, but the foundation looks at it as a way to donate to any organization they deem deserving.

"Robert's premise [has always been] that balance between enjoying quality food and living a healthy lifestyle," says McLean. "We want to support organizations that believe in that, but it goes bigger than that."

For years, Irvine has worked closely with the Gary Sinise Foundation, which organizes a lot of entertainment for the troops, and the USO. (He was in Japan with the USO at the beginning of the year.) McLean says the Robert Irvine Foundation will continue to support those organizations and other similar nonprofits.

In April, Irvine will take part in the two-day food festival, "Savor—A Celebration of Wine, Food & Spirits" presented by Foxwoods Resort Casino at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. A portion of the proceeds from that event will be donated to the Robert Irvine Foundation, kicking off its fundraising in a major way. The Savor event will take place on April 10 and 11.

Organizations that are interested in receiving money from the foundation can apply online. This coming October, a year after the foundation received its 501c3 designation, the board of directors will review all applications and make donations.

For more on the Robert Irvine Foundation, visit *robertirvinefoundation.org*. Visit *savorct.com* for more information on the April event.

If you have an organization with an event that you'd like us to consider for the Community page, please send the details to khartman@connecticutmag.com

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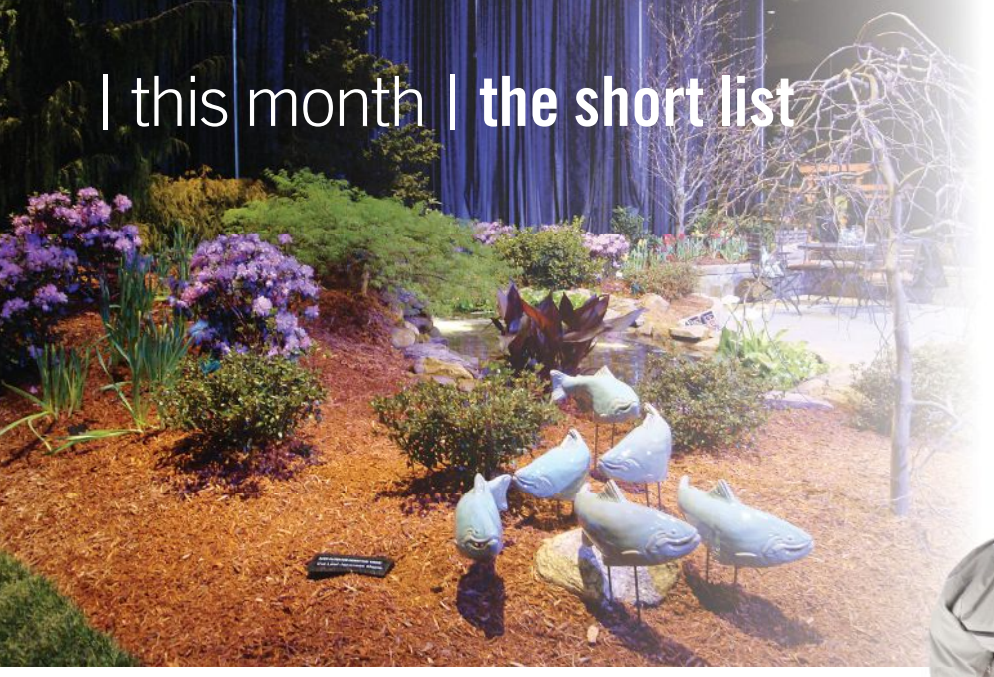


SPRING HOPES ETERNAL

We interrupt the cold and snow of this winter for a spring interlude: the 34th annual **Connecticut Flower and Garden Show** on Feb. 19-22 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. In addition to more than an acre of gardens and 300 vendors, there will be seminars with Mar Jennings, Roger Swain and other horticultural experts. *(860) 844-8461, ctflowershow.com.*

CLASSIC EVENING

On Feb. 21 at 8 p.m. the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra presents ***Carnivale*** at the Garde Arts Center in New London. A shuffle concert, selections will include works by Gershwin, Ginastera, Copland and Ravel. *(860) 444-7373, gardearts.org.*

TIME TO PLAY

"Jim Henson's Sid the Science Kid LIVE: Let's Play!" will have families taking an entertaining—and educational—journey through their five senses during two big shows at the Palace in Stamford on Feb. 6. *(203) 325-4466, palacestamford.org.*

CULT OF PERSONALITY

Grammy award-winning **Living Colour** rocks the Ridgefield Playhouse on Feb. 13. Known for hits such as "Cult of Personality" and "Open Letter (to a Landlord)," the band—with its original lineup intact—promises an evening of hard-driving rock, funk and heavy metal fusion. *(203) 438-5795, ridgefieldplayhouse.org.*

MIGHT AS WELL JUMP

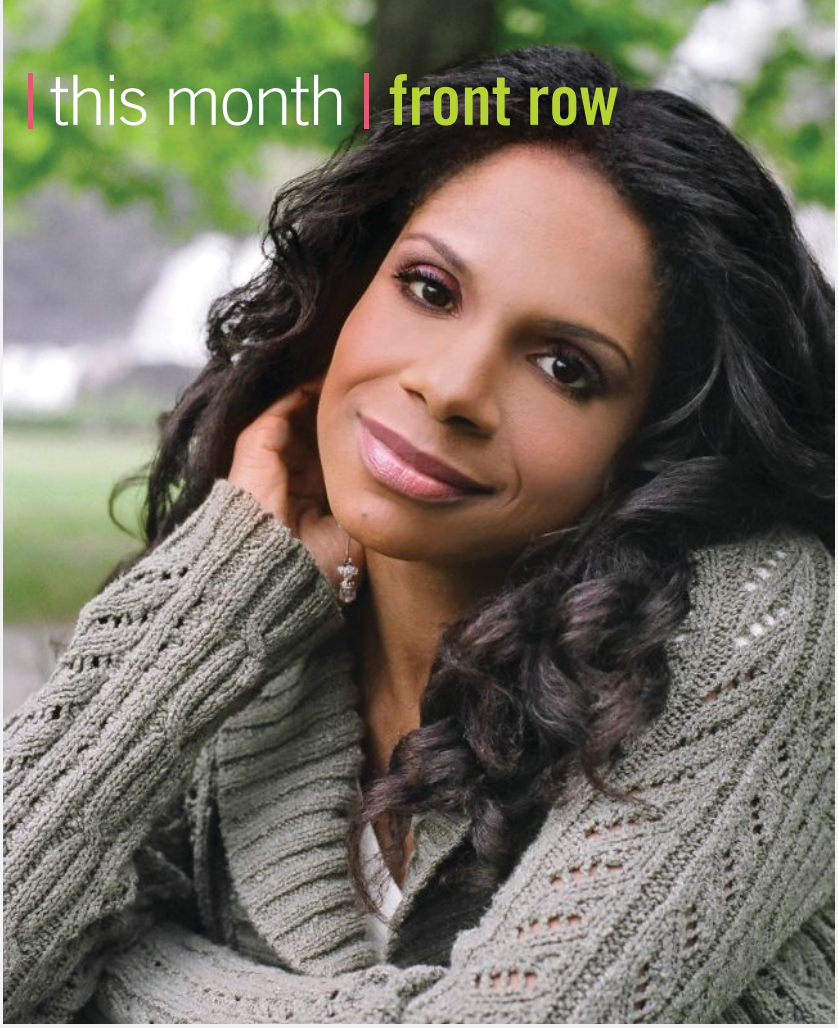
On Feb. 6-8, the best ski jumpers from across the Northeast will descend upon Salisbury for the **Jumpfest Winter Festival.** In addition to the U.S. Eastern Ski Jumping Championships and the 89th Salisbury Invitational Championship, there will also be a chili cookoff, target jumping, human dogsled races, youth competitions, ice carving bonfires and even a snow "ball." *jumpfest.org.*

WHISTLER ON THE ROAD

Yale University Art Gallery examines the artistic development of James Abbott McNeill Whistler in ***Whistler in Paris, London and Venice***, which opens Jan. 30 and runs through July 19. Centered on three sets of Whistler's etchings, the exhibition is the first at the gallery solely dedicated to the artist. *(203) 432-0600, artgallery.yale.edu.*

BOTTOM LEFT: KARSTEN STAIGER; TOP RIGHT: © FUSE—THINKSTOCK

See February 2015 calendar listings at connecticutmag.com/calendar



You could say that singer and actress **Audra McDonald** was always destined for Broadway stardom. She won her first Tony Award for Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a Musical for *Carousel* at the Lincoln Center Theatre just one year after graduating from Juilliard. This past year she outdid herself —and everyone else, too—when she took home her sixth Tony for her role as legend Billie Holiday in *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*.

On Feb. 13, McDonald will grace the stage at the Jorgensen Center for Performing Arts at the University of Connecticut with her mix of classics and favorites. The show begins at 8 p.m. Tickets are available online at jorgensen.uconn.edu.

AUDRA MCDONALD
FEB. 13 | 8 PM
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(860) 486-4226, jorgensen.uconn.edu

You've performed in Connecticut before. What keeps bringing you back?

Yes, I've performed in Connecticut and really enjoy performing there. I live in Westchester, so it feels like I am performing for my neighbors.

What are you planning for the show?

We'll be doing a mix of standards from the great American songbook. I'll also be performing a few fan favorites, some songs from my most recent release on Nonesuch, *Go Back Home*, and several new songs that I recently added to my repertoire. There should definitely be something for everyone.

What did it feel like to win your sixth Tony award for playing Billie Holiday?

It felt, and still feels, totally surreal.

What is it like playing a legend like Holiday? Are there particular challenges?

It's a huge honor. The hardest part about doing Billie was making sure that no part of my singing voice or speaking voice made its way into the theater. The moment I got on stage it was all about Billie.

Did you grow up on Holiday's music?

Growing up my dad played her music, but I didn't think too much about her because she kind of scared me. She did drugs and died early. As a young kid, that was intimidating. Now as an adult, I admire her. I don't want to say I pity her because she didn't want anyone's pity, but I do wish she was treated better by society.

What's on the horizon for you?

I recently kicked off my concert tour, so am really looking forward to performing around the country.

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Coney Island in Hartford

Coney Island has been an American touchstone for 150 years, a destination where families have flocked for fun in the sun and amusements aplenty. When you visit the Brooklyn, N.Y., beachfront, you step into a living, breathing piece of history.

Beginning Jan. 31, the Wadsworth Atheneum mounts the first exhibition of its kind dedicated to the amusement park. ***Coney Island: Visions of an American Dreamland 1861-2008*** uses visual art to explore the lure that Coney Island has exerted over Americans for over a century. It is curated by Dr. Robin Jaffee Frank, Chief Curator and Krieble Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture.

The work of a wide range of artists will be coordinated to create this lens into American culture. The exhibit includes the Impressionist paintings of William Merritt Chase and John Henry Twachtman depicting "the people's beach," and contemporary images by photographers Diane Arbus and Walker Evans, Red Grooms, Yasuo Kuniyoshi and others.

"What these artists saw from 1861 to 2008 at Coney Island and how they chose to portray it varied widely in style and mood over time, mirroring the aspirations and disappointments of the era and of the country," explains the museum's website. "Taken together, this tableaux of wonder and menace, hope and despair, dreams and nightmares, become metaphors for the collective soul of a nation."

More than 140 objects—paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, posters, architectural artifacts, carousel animals, ephemera and film clips—are featured in the museum's newly expanded and renovated special exhibition galleries.

The show is part of the debut of the Wadsworth Atheneum's major renovation, which began in 2010. Thirty-two galleries and 15 public spaces were updated as part of this $33 million project.

A variety of individual programs will take

The exhibition features more than 140 objects including "Beach Scene" by Samuel S. Carr from the Smith College Museum of Art in Northampton, MA (top), "Steeplechase Funny Face" from the collection of Ken Harck (below) and "Wooden Horses" by Reginald Marsh (bottom).

place throughout the Coney Island exhibition's run including a "Tunnel of Love "exhibit on the first Thursday, Feb. 5; a symposium called "Coney Island: An Intersection of Art and Identity" on Feb. 27-28; viewings of the films *Annie Hall* and *Sophie's Choice* on April 12; and much more.

Visitors can take the magic home with them by purchasing a fully-illustrated 304-page catalogue that includes the first sustained visual analysis of great works of art about Coney Island by Dr. Robin Jaffee Frank and essays by distinguished cultural historians. The catalogue will be sold for $50 in The Museum Shop.

This is an exhibition not to be missed during the beginning of this year.

Coney Island: Visions of an American Dreamland, 1861-2008 runs from Jan. 31 through May 31.

(860) 278-2670, thewadsworth.org. | K.H. |

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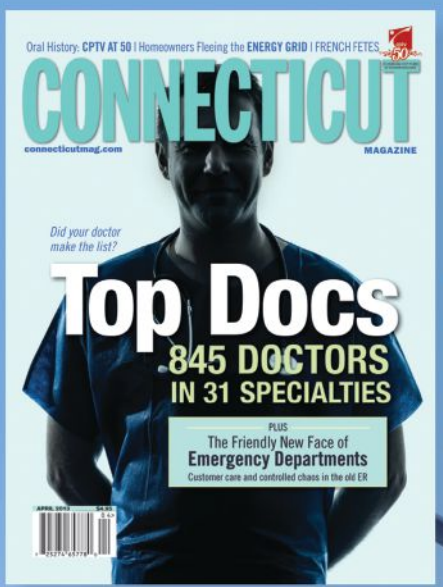
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Big Halley

Peter Halley has been marking the modern artistic landscape with his bold, geometric paintings for the last quarter century. In February, nine of those iconic works will come together in ***Peter Halley: Big Paintings*** at the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme. The show explores the changes the artist and his work has gone through over the years. Halley will stop by for an in-depth discussion of his work on Feb. 8.

"Every exhibit is a big deal for us, but this one falls in line with a longer series of projects we've undertaken to look at…in Connecticut art, the modern and contemporary artists who have lived and worked here," says Colman. "Through these projects we started to take a look at recent decades, and Peter's name stands at top of that list."

Halley, who lives and works in New York City, attended Yale University before heading to New Orleans to earn his MFA. Afterward, he returned to NYC and forged his signature style—pairing bold, abrasive colors with texture and geometric patterns he calls "prisons" and "cells," in an effort to comment on the "geometricization of social space in the world," and commercialization.

His work often uses industrial paints in artificial Day-Glo, metallic and pearlescent colors to "evoke the intensity of industrial and commercial products," states the museum's website. Many of the paintings included in the exhibit use Roll-a-Tex, a paint additive typically used in home improvements to create textured walls. The rough surface juxtaposes against Halley's precise lines.

"The exhibit came together organically," says Colman. "It started with a studio visit to his workspace in New York in 2012. I got to know him and his work quite a bit better. It emerged out of a conversation between me and the artist."

Halley's work has remained constant for nearly thirty years, utilizing the same symbols, but Colman assures there's incredible diversity between decades. The Florence Griswold exhibit will be divided into three different sections—the 1980s, the 1990s to early 2000s and more recent works. Halley will also unveil a new work at the opening.

"One aspect I hope visitors take away from the exhibit is how omnipresent his work really seems," says Colman. "Types of phenomena he depicted in the 80s and 90s seem totally mundane today, like interconnected networks. We internalize that with Facebook and the Internet."

Peter Halley: Big Paintings runs Feb. 6 to March 31.

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CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE

For more information, see page 66

Winter Flight

One of the biggest thrills of the winter season is the return of migrating eagles to the region around the lower Connecticut River. These magnificent creatures spend the cold months here, providing a unique opportunity to observe one of the biggest successes in species preservation.

Connecticut River Expeditions and Connecticut Audubon are once again partnering to offer **Eagle/Winter Wonderland Cruises** on the Connecticut River, starting out of Haddam. Trips are aboard the *RiverQuest*, piloted by Capt. Mark Yuknat.

"We get visiting eagles from up north that can't catch fish through the ice there so they come down here, south of the swing bridge where the river doesn't usually freeze and there's plenty of fish, and they stay about five to six weeks," says Yuknat, who along with his wife Mindy, has been leading the cruises for 14 years. "If we're lucky, we can see as many as thirty visiting eagles, but it's usually about ten to twenty. Obviously, with wild creatures, it varies."

Bald and golden eagles have been spotted during cruises, as well as an abundance of other winter wildlife, including falcons, cormorants, hawks, ducks and the occasional seal. "We've seen eagles do some interesting things," says Yuknat. "Sometimes they'll mirror each other's flights. We've also seen them do mock battle of sort, where they lock talons, stop flying and just tumble down toward the water, and then at the last second, break apart and fly off, like a game of chicken. They are real cool birds to watch. You never know what they'll do."

Departing from Eagle Landing State Park (and weather permitting), two-hour cruises begin Feb. 7 and run through March 15. Guests are encouraged to book in advance, dress warmly and to bring their own cameras and binoculars. Each cruise also offers a naturalist on board to answer questions as well as a spotter.

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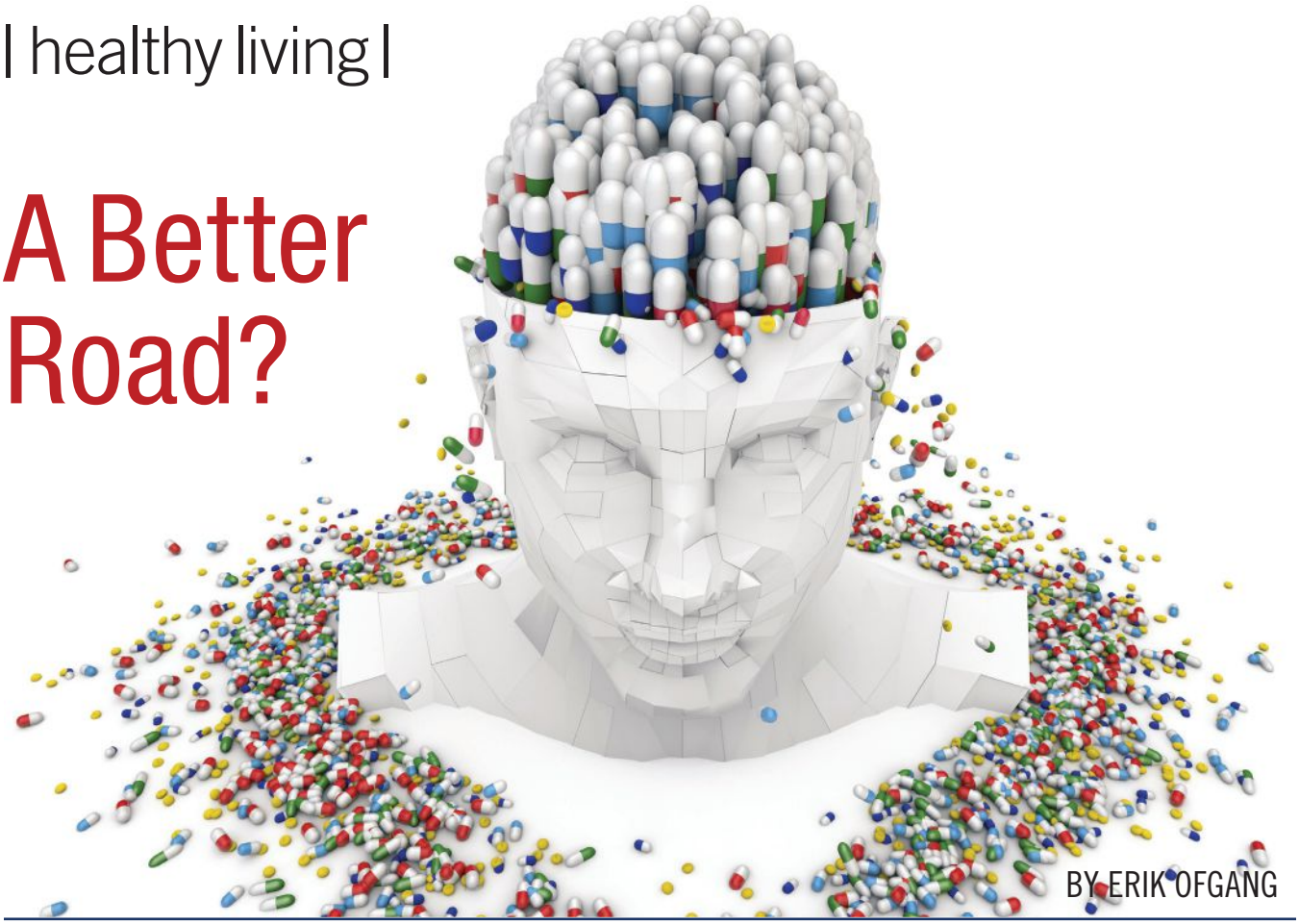
A Better Road?



BY ERIK OFGANG

In 2012 Matt Eacott hit rock bottom . . . again. The Avon native in his early thirties had spent the previous decade in and out of rehab facilities, trying unsuccessfully to kick his addiction—first to prescription painkillers and later to heroin. He had gone to more than a dozen in-patient treatment centers, some of them long-term.

Along the way he carried with him the usual addiction baggage: problems with his family, brief periods of sobriety followed by relapses and frequent drug-related run-ins with the law—including about nine arrests, one of which resulted in a year-long sentence in the Cheshire Correctional Facility. After his latest relapse, it looked as though he was heading back to prison, possibly for a whole lot longer. Eacott had violated his parole and was facing a five-year sentence.

At this point, Eacott had all but lost hope. In a meeting with a longtime therapist, he recalls throwing his arms up in the air and asking, "What am I going to try this time?" His therapist had an unexpected answer and said, "You know what? I have a very good friend and he's started something that's different, and I think really could work for you."

That something different was a radical addiction recovery program developed by Aware Recovery Care, a Madison-based company that had recently formed. Eacott was intrigued by the program but was not overly optimistic. "I didn't believe in myself, I was hopeless," he recalls. Yet, he figured he had nothing to lose and decided to try it.

For those with long-term addictions like Eacott, the statistics are pretty grim. More than half of those who attend a recovery program relapse. That's part of the reason there are so many addiction treatment centers, better than 14,500 nationally and more than 100 in Connecticut alone.

Steve Randazzo, founder of Aware Recovery Care, had worked in recovery for 20 years and was painfully aware of the mixed results following addiction treatment. " I was witnessing the difficulty people were having with maintaining any type of long-term recovery," he says. "There was a very high relapse rate and a relatively low success rate. I had an entrepreneurial itch and I really wanted to see if something could be done to improve outcomes."

Many people with addictions, whether to drugs or alcohol, relapse in particular when they return to their homes. Randazzo wondered if he could create a recovery program designed to work within the home, which could help avoid the necessity of a post-rehab readjustment.

Using this basic concept and inspired by the visiting nurse home care model, Randazzo, with the help of psychiatrist Charles Riordan and other experts, set out to design a rehab program that he hoped would work better than previous ones. During their research, Randazzo and his team met with professionals from the home-care nursing field, and experts from places including Dartmouth-Hitchcock, New York University and Columbia University.

The program that emerged from these efforts is an intensive year-long, home-based treatment plan. It treats addiction as a chronic condition and employs a team of healthcare professionals, including an addiction psychiatrist, registered nurse and certified recovery adviser, who all help patients adjust to life without the substance they've come to depend on. Patients are also monitored through frequent random drug and alcohol tests as well as voluntary continuous GPS monitoring. In some ways, the program brings the intensive level of care of an in-patient rehab setting to a participant's home and everyday life; it also lasts longer than most inpatient programs, even the long-term ones.

The company launched a proof-of-concept pilot study beginning in December 2012. Because it's a year long process, only a few participants have already finished the whole program, but initial results based on a small number of participants have been good, in some ways stunningly so. Five people enrolled in the program in the first year, and four, or 80 percent, successfully refrained from drug use.

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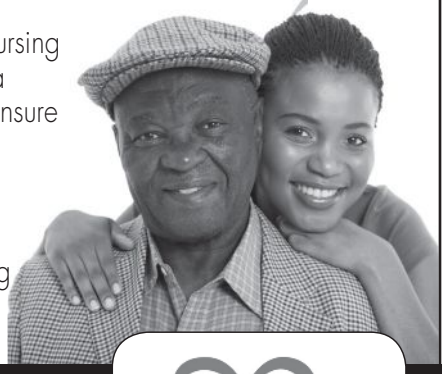

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Dr. Ellen Edens, a psychiatrist at Yale School of Medicine, co-authored a paper in the journal *Connecticut Medicine* that is based on the proof-of-concept study. She has no official affiliation with the company but was impressed with the treatment approach. The abstract for her paper states that "addiction is increasingly conceptualized as a chronic disease, yet the current addiction treatment system is largely based upon an acute illness model."

Edens says the Aware Recovery Care program remedies this situation by using a chronic care treatment model. "With diabetes, if someone has a relapse, they don't just get sent home, they have tons of patient education or are called frequently," she says. "A lot of times they'll be sent home with ways to check their sugars and then they'll report in on a daily basis. This is how we're dealing with chronic conditions now, but it hasn't yet come to the addiction world."

The year-long program at Aware Recovery Care costs about $38,000—expensive, but comparable to in-patient treatment centers, which often start at about $30,000 for 28-day programs. If the program is successful, the ultimate savings are hard to tally.

As a self-described "kid from suburbia," there's a sense of incredulity in Eacott's voice as he talks about how he became addicted to heroin. He started using marijuana at around 13. In college, he moved on to recreational pain killer use. He would buy OxyContin on the streets and was arrested for the first time after trying to buy it with a fake prescription.

Eacott's case was transferred to Hartford and that's when his addiction worsened. "That's where my use went from OxyContin to what I was told was a cheaper, more effective, more available option, which was heroin," he says.

His chronicle of addiction is tragically familiar. Heroin use in Connecticut and across the nation is on the rise. In 2013, Connecticut had more than 180 deaths from heroin; in just the first six months of 2014 the *New Haven Register* reported at least 151 people had died from accidental opiate overuse.

Many of those who use heroin today are like Eacott—young and from suburban areas not traditionally associated with illegal narcotic use. They are also often drawn to the drug through what starts as medically prescribed use of OxyContin or other opiates. Eacott says that the road from OxyContin to heroin is one that is increasingly traveled, and as a result, heroin is even more available today than it was when he started using. Eacott didn't try heroin until college; now he says it's readily available to most high school kids.

Edens explains that when conventional addiction treatment stints end, a return home is often problematic.

"You send them back home where there's a lot of frustration, etc. You tell them, 'You need to call your insurance company and try

to access a primary care doctor, and, by the way, you need to find a second therapist, and you need to find a psychiatrist,'" she says. "It's hard enough for me to contact my insurance company and get through when I'm sober, but when you're in immediate recovery you don't have a normal brain, your brain has been rewired to depend on the substance that you now don't have, so usually in new sobriety you're less capable of dealing with a lot of these frustrations and problem solving, so it's helpful having someone right there that can say, 'Let me help you, let's sit down and call the insurance company together.'"

This return home from rehab was Eacott's Achilles' heel. "I was always able to go away and do pretty well at the treatment center but my issue would be that I eventually had to come back home," he says. "It wasn't that my parents' house was such an unhealthy environment, it was just where I was used to doing all the things that I was doing."

That's part of the reason he was intrigued with the Aware Recovery Care program. As he was undergoing rehab he wanted to be able to try and rebuild his life. "I wanted to show up for work every day. I wanted to be a productive member of society. I wanted to have a relationship. I wanted to make friends," he says.

Thanks to the constant monitoring and extensive support provided by the program, he was able to refrain from drug use, hold a steady job and regain the trust of family members. "It was the perfect combination of structure, support and reality," he recalls. "When I had to go away to an in-patient setting it's not really a reality. It's a controlled environment."

While in the program Eacott began a relationship as he had hoped to do and he is now engaged. After working for a time at his family's construction business, he decided to help others who had experienced similar issues, and now works as a recovery adviser at Aware Recovery Care. He also helps with the company's business planning and marketing.

Though Eacott and others who completed the program have been successful, Edens cautions that five people is a small sample size and scientific conclusions can't yet be made. Perhaps just participating in a pilot program, or its cost, influenced the outcomes of those involved, she says. She'd like to raise funds for a full-scale study because she suspects the program's early successes will be duplicated.

"It's taking many things that we do know are effective and kind of combining them into one," she says. "The hypothesis is quite plausible. In my opinion, it's going to be the way that we handle addiction in the future."

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40 UNDER FORTY

This year's best and brightest among Generation Next include philanthropists, artists, community leaders, athletes, educators and entrepreneurs—all nominated by friends, family, coworkers, admirers and *Connecticut Magazine* editors.

Class of 2015

BY RAY BENDICI, DOUGLAS P. CLEMENT, KATE HARTMAN AND ERIK OFGANG

Liz Shuman & Nicole Burke

PHOTO BY MEGAN ARNDT

LIZ SHUMAN, 38, MADISON

Inspiration and co-founder of OutRUN38

Why she's on the list: As the "director of inspiration" for the nonprofit organization OutRUN38, Shuman has shown others what it is to push past obstacles. Shuman was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at age 7, when her life expectancy was just 12. She celebrated her 38th birthday in September (her current life expectancy), and is still running—her lifelong passion. Her friend Nicole Burke founded OutRUN38 to support her through frequent hospital stays and raise money for others fighting the disease.

NICOLE BURKE, 38, CLINTON

Co-founder of OutRUN38

Why she's on the list: Burke founded OutRUN38 with the help of the organization's inspiration, her lifelong friend Liz Shuman, and Brian Thomas, to raise money for programs and people living with cystic fibrosis. Born out of a small Facebook page, OutRUN38 literally runs on the backs of the nearly 5,500 runners who log miles for Liz across 40 countries. The original goal was to run 3,800 miles and raise $3,800 by Shuman's 38th birthday. They've surpassed that, and hosted their first 5K in August.

CARLOS QUILES, 33, MERIDEN

Occupational therapist and athlete

Why he's on the list: Quiles has been in a wheelchair since age 2 when surgery to remove a tumor on his spine caused permanent damage. He has dedicated his life to assisting others in similar situations. He works at the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain, helping kids adjust to life in a wheelchair and overseeing the mentor program. Quiles also runs sports clinics and camps for children, plays on Connecticut's only wheelchair basketball team and is a former Paralympic track-and-field athlete.

TRI NGUYEN

ALLISON WILLIAMS, 26, NEW CANAAN

Actress

Why she's on the list: Williams has been winning accolades since being cast as Marnie Michaels on HBO's "Girls," but saw her profile soar to new heights when she sang and flew—live—as Peter Pan in NBC's holiday TV musical last November. "Girls" just began its fourth season and Williams continues to guest star on other shows, too.

JAMIE MCCARTHY/GETTY IMAGES

DR. ADITYA TADINADA, 37, WEST HARTFORD

Assistant professor of oral and maxillofacial radiology at the University of Connecticut

Why he's on the list: As part of a pilot study at UConn Health Center, Tadinada has found evidence that use of Botox—which has been deemed effective in relieving TMJ and is currently going through a 5-year, $4 million clinical trial by the National Institutes of Health—actually causes dangerous side effects including bone-density loss. His investigation is just one example of the research he's doing to improve dental safety.

CLIO NEWTON, 25, MADISON

Artist

Why she's on the list: Newton has an uncanny ability to capture the spirit of her subjects in her lifelike charcoal and oil portraits—a skill noticed and celebrated by many who have commissioned her work including Yale-New Haven Hospital, which hired her to paint a portrait of Dr. Myron Genel in December. This year, she was awarded a residency at the AKKU Atelier in Zurich, Switzerland, where she is getting the opportunity to live and work abroad while she prepares an exhibition at the Kunskiste Gallery.

ALLYSON ANGELINI, 27, LEDYARD

Owner of Full Heart Farm and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) founder

Why she's on the list: Angelini purchased Full Heart Farm in Ledyard in 2012 (when she was only 24) through the USDA's Farm Service Agency Program for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. She just wrapped her third CSA season, feeding more than 50 families in her local area from her six-acre farm that grows organic fruit and vegetables. She also raises thousands of meat chickens, egg-laying chickens and 18 pigs a year.

A SUE WESLER

AUSTIN McCHORD, 29, NORWALK

Founder and CEO of Datto

Why he's on the list: In eight short years, McChord has taken Datto Backup from a one-man basement startup to one of the fastest-growing tech companies in the nation, topping $50 million in revenue for three years straight and employing more than 300 globally. Last year he was named a finalist for Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year as well as a CRN Top 25 Innovator. He is also on the board of the Connecticut Technology Council.

KIA LEVEY, 38, NEW HAVEN

Project director, The New Haven MOMS Partnership

Why she's on the list: A lifelong resident of New Haven, Levey has deeply reinvested herself in the community, spending more than a decade working for nonprofits that benefit New Haven. As project director for the New Haven MOMS Partnership, she coordinates various agencies across the city to support the well-being of mothers and families by making services more easily available to those who need it.

MANDI MARTINI

NICOLE BRADDOCK, 29, OAKVILLE, Baker

Why she's on the list: This self-taught baker teamed up with her husband to launch the mobile bakery business Hardcore Sweet Cupcakes in 2012—a delicious fusion of bold flavor profiles and vintage style. They travel in their cupcake truck, "Betty," and work from their shop in Oakville. Their cupcakes, which won an episode of the Food Network's "Cupcake Wars," pack a punch both in name and taste. Braddock will travel to Los Angeles later this month to bake cupcakes for the Academy Awards.

▲ ALEXIS SMITH, 36, HAMDEN

Deputy director, New Haven Legal Assistance Association

Why she's on the list: As the deputy director of New Haven Legal Assistance, Smith has been involved with standing up for those who aren't always able to stand up for themselves. She is also past president of the George Crawford Black Bar Association, and has served as secretary for the Connecticut Bar Association, the Connecticut Center for Arts and Technology and Community Partners in Action. She referees high school soccer and basketball when she's not taking care of her two young children.

▲ SARA VALENTINO, 38, SEYMOUR

Social worker

Why she's on the list: Valentino is the co-founder and clinical director of Gaurdian Ad Litem Services, a charitable organization dedicated to improving the lives of those with mental illness. She leads the organization's flagship program Melissa's Project, which helps make the dreams and goals of those with mental illness, and their families, more attainable.

▼ MICHAEL BLACK, 38, FAIRFIELD, Architect

Why he's on the list: After graduating from Vermont Technical College, Black founded Koala Residential Lifestyle, an architecture firm that designs and builds properties with a goal of creating structures that live harmoniously with nature. Rather than square footage and numbers, his designs are motivated by preserving the environmental landscape of Connecticut for future generations.

SARA DZIEDZIC, 34, WOODSTOCK

Teacher, Woodstock Academy

Why she's on the list: A few years ago, Dziedzic organized a group of her dedicated students to form Family Related Effective Solutions for Humanity (FRESH), a nonprofit service group that has since worked toward poverty relief and awareness in the Quiet Corner. Under her guidance, the students have raised more than $35,000 through extracurricular efforts, and have created a middle school mentoring program, funded summer camperships, run charity drives and have lent assistance to families struggling with poverty.

RYAN HANRAHAN, 30, GUILFORD

Television meteorologist

Why he's on the list: Hanrahan has been drawn to the weather since he was a boy growing up in Guilford. Today he educates the masses as the weekday prime-time meteorologist at NBC Connecticut and travels the state visiting schools to inspire a new generation to get excited about science and the weather.

PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES

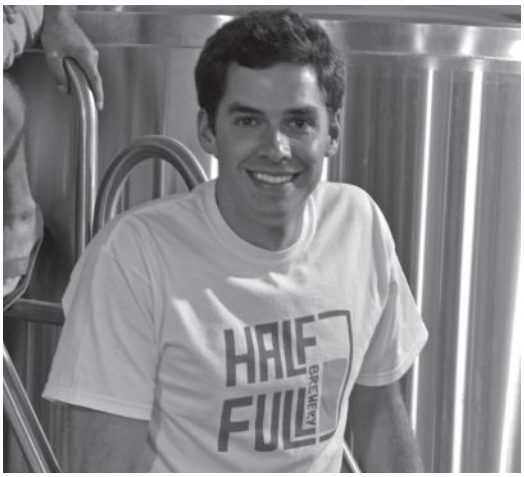
D.J. COTRONA, 34, NEW HAVEN, Actor

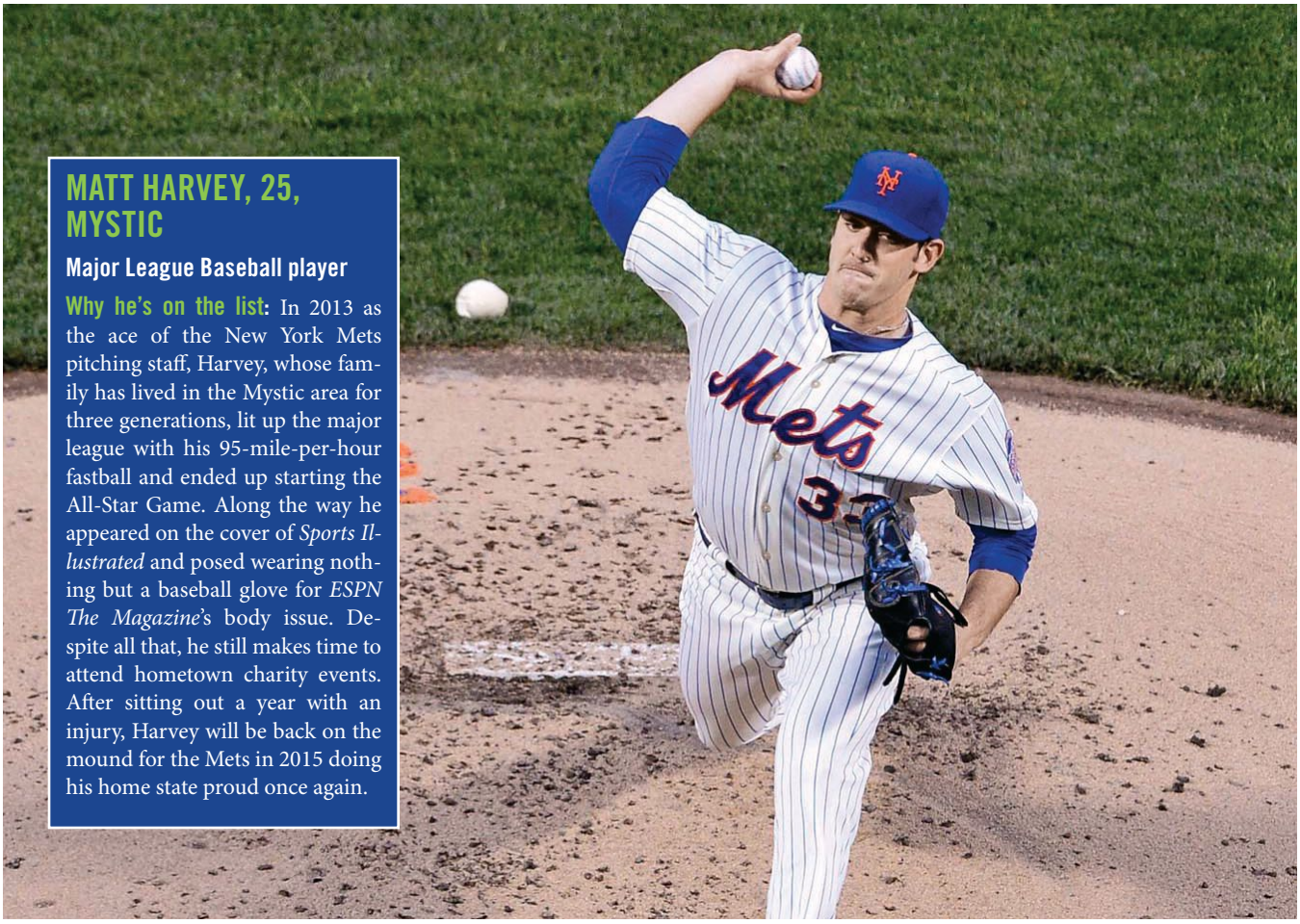
Why he's on the list: The ruggedly handsome Cotrona was an easy choice for a film like Paramount Pictures' *G.I. Joe: Retaliation*, but the son of a school teacher who studied criminal justice and political science on a pre-law track at Northeastern University in Boston isn't content to be eye candy in action films. His current gig involves starring as bank robber Seth Gecko in "From Dusk Till Dawn: The Series" on the El Rey Network, which is based on the 1996 action-horror film written by Quentin Tarantino and directed by Robert Rodriguez, who launched El Rey. Season 2 started in January.

CONOR HORRIGAN, 32, LITCHFIELD

Brewery owner

Why he's on the list: Horrigan walked away from an unrewarding Wall Street job to open Stamford's Half Full Brewery, a beer company dedicated to reminding people to look on the sunny side of life. Today, his company works to support other entrepreneurs and dreamers to spread good beer and good cheer far and wide.





MATT HARVEY, 25, MYSTIC

Major League Baseball player

Why he's on the list: In 2013 as the ace of the New York Mets pitching staff, Harvey, whose family has lived in the Mystic area for three generations, lit up the major league with his 95-mile-per-hour fastball and ended up starting the All-Star Game. Along the way he appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and posed wearing nothing but a baseball glove for *ESPN The Magazine*'s body issue. Despite all that, he still makes time to attend hometown charity events. After sitting out a year with an injury, Harvey will be back on the mound for the Mets in 2015 doing his home state proud once again.

MARC LEVINE/NY METS

▲ MATTHEW FITZSIMMONS, 34, WINDSOR

Assistant attorney general

Why he's on the list: It's a brave new world of technology and Fitzsimmons is on the front lines of privacy and consumer protection. An assistant attorney general, he serves as chair of the Attorney General's Privacy Task Force and is the state's lead attorney on all matters involving data security and privacy. He has played a key role in multistate actions with Internet, technology, healthcare and retail companies across the country.

▼ TERESA DUFOUR, 34, NEW HAVEN

Traffic reporter, "Good Morning Connecticut"/ host, "Connecticut Style"

Why she's on the list: The vibrant Dufour is a daily double threat: After providing thousands of commuters across Southeastern Connecticut with the latest traffic updates on "Good Morning Connecticut" from 5 to 7 a.m., she switches gears and is back on the air at 12:30 p.m. with "Connecticut Style," where she shares the better parts of Connecticut life, including fashion, health, beauty and food.

JILLIAN FARRELL

▲ KATE STEPHEN, 33, BETHLEHEM

Jewelry designer

Why she's on the list: Stephen has been designing her line of contemporary, sculptural jewelry for the last 15 years. She pulls inspiration from nature to create her elegantly beautiful tangles of wire and semi-precious stones. She plays with asymmetry, color and texture in her designs that speak to a young, chic clientele. Sold online and in shops around the state, Stephen is carving a creative niche for herself.

Camila Bortolleto

Carolina Bortolleto

Twin Sisters
CAMILA and CAROLINA BORTOLLETO, 26, DANBURY, Activists

Why they are on the list: Born in Brazil, the sisters became undocumented residents of the U.S. when they moved to Danbury at the age of 9. In 2010, they co-founded Connecticut Students for a DREAM, a state chapter of a national organization of young adults that works for the rights of undocumented youth and their families. Despite the obstacles they faced, both went on to graduate college and continue to support the rights of undocumented residents. Camila serves as the program coordinator for Own the Dream Campaign at United We Dream. Carolina works as a college access coordinator.

SEAN GARDNER/GETTY IMAGES

JOEY LOGANO, 24, MIDDLETOWN, NASCAR driver

Why he's on the list: Last year was the best year of Logano's ascendant NASCAR career—he set personal bests with five wins, 16 top-five finishes and 22 top-ten finishes, and was in the hunt for the Sprint Cup Championship until his No. 22 slipped off a jack during a pit stop with only 17 laps remaining in the final race, putting him 4th overall for the title. He also won the checkered wedding flag in 2014, tying the knot with longtime girlfriend Brittany Baca in December.

JEREMIAH GRACE, 33, NEW HAVEN

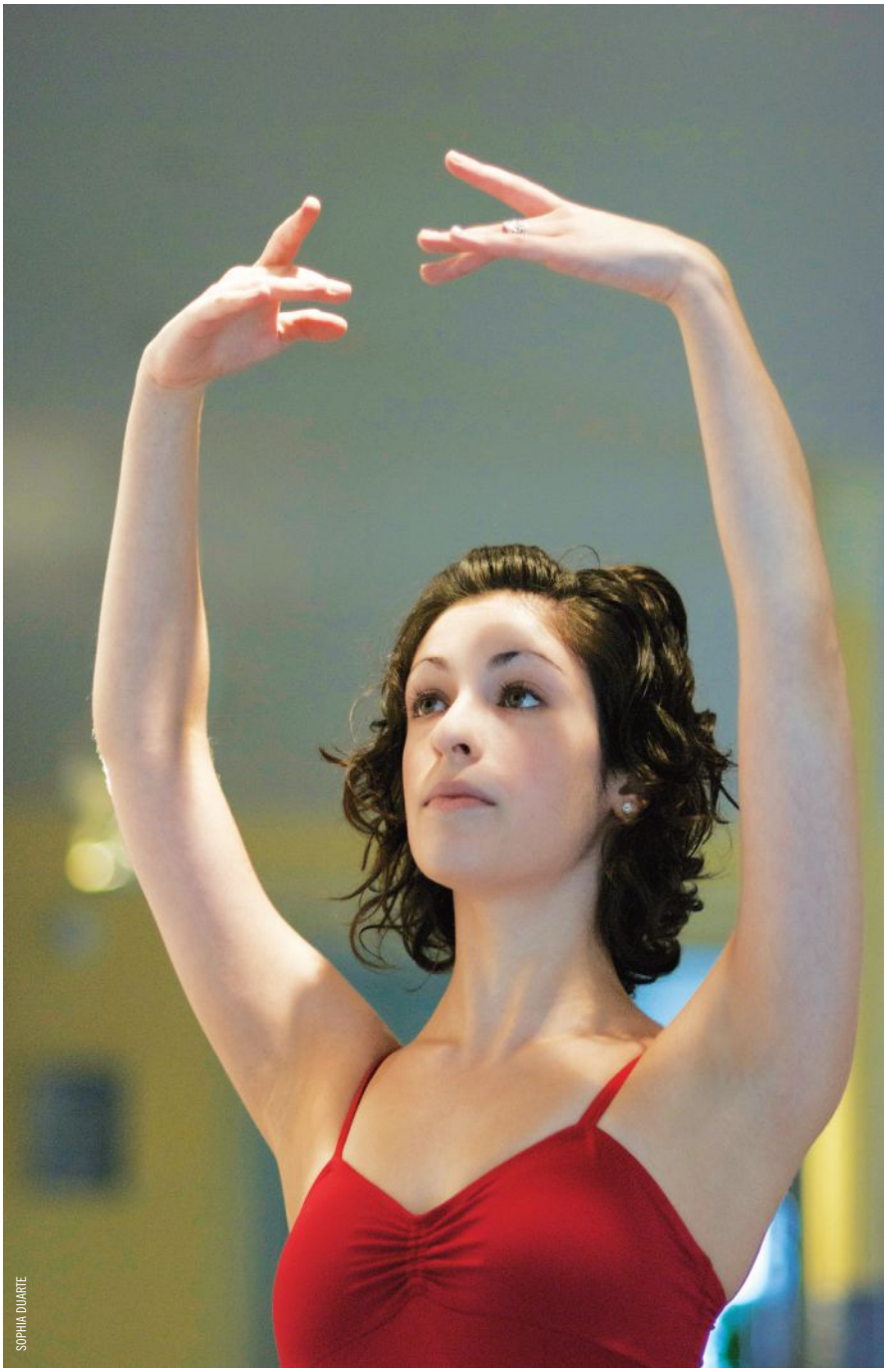
Administrator

Why he's on the list: As the Connecticut State Director for the Northeast Charter Schools Network, Grace advocates on behalf of students, works with lawmakers at the state level, and partners with schools and nonprofits to create a more unified advocacy for Connecticut's at-risk children.

NICOLE WAGNER, 30, WEST HARTFORD

Scientist/CEO LambdaVision

Why she's on the list: While working on her PhD in Molecular and Cell Biology at the University of Connecticut, Wagner founded the biotech startup LambdaVision with one of her professors, Robert Birge. The company is on the cutting edge of vision restoration and plans to begin animal testing of a protein-based cure for some forms of blindness.



SOPHIA DUARTE

ELIZABETH COX, 25, NEW MILFORD, Dancer/dance teacher

Why she's on the list: Cox has danced as an ensemble member in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall and for the renowned modern dance company MOMIX. As a freelance artist she has worked with Adam Battlestein as a Shadowland dancer in his company Catapult Entertainment, which made a splash on the hit TV show "America's Got Talent." If you saw Darren Aronofsky's *The Black Swan*, you saw her as a background dancer. Cox, who trained in classical ballet and jazz dance, has also taught for the past five years under the direction of Broadway veterans Elizabeth Parkinson and Scott Wise at Fineline Theatre Arts in New Milford.

SARAH BARRIOS, 20, TORRINGTON, Singer/songwriter/musician

Why she's on the list: One of Connecticut's brightest rising stars, Barrios started her career in music just two years ago and with her vulnerable, haunting voice quickly made a name for herself as the girl to watch. She's the New England Music Award's 2014 winner for Best New Act of The Year, and is nominated this year for Female Performer of the Year. Awards will be presented at Showcase Live in Foxboro, Mass., on April 18.

EMILY TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHY

DAVID DESROCHES, 35, BRIDGEPORT

Writer/editor/producer

Why he's on the list: As an award-winning reporter for the *Darien Times* and an independent journalist, DesRoches exposed systemic illegal activity in a wealthy public school district that resulted in an independent investigation, multiple resignations and organizational restructuring. He also reported on the events in Ferguson, Mo., lived in Ethiopia for a year, where he worked for a nonprofit media project, and taught songwriting to people with physical and intellectual disabilities. He recently joined WNPR/CPTV as an education reporter.

MAIA STERN

DAMON MAULUCCI, 37, HARTFORD/CANTON

Writer/director/producer/co-creator of Sacred Heart University's Film and Television Master's Program

Why he's on the list: Maulucci is the writer/director/producer of the feature film *Detonator*, which was selected for the 2012 Philadelphia Film Festival, and is gearing up for his next feature, *This Thing On*? He distilled his experience as a film student at Columbia and an adjunct professor at area universities to create Sacred Heart's FTMA program, which focuses on strong storytelling and prepares students for work in the industry.

JUSTIN LIBERMAN, 34, SOUTH WINDSOR

Director/co-creator of Sacred Heart University's Film and Television Master's Program

Why he's on the list: A professional director (he will direct his first feature-length film, *Mary Joe*, shot in Connecticut this year), he returned to his alma mater to create the school's first film master's program alongside fellow director and graduate Damon Maulucci. The FTMA program graduated its first class in May 2014 and hosted a film festival in September.

BRETT ORZECHOWSKI, 36, HARTFORD

CEO/Publisher of The Connecticut Mirror and The Connecticut News Project, Inc.

Why he's on the list: Orzechowski was appointed CEO and publisher of the nonprofit, nonpartisan, investigative news outlet, The Connecticut Mirror, and its parent organization The Connecticut News Project, Inc. in August 2013 after most recently teaching journalism at Quinnipiac University. He has 15 state, regional and national awards to his name over the course of his career.

BOBBYE KNOLL PETERSON, 37, MIDDLETOWN

Executive director, North End Action Team (NEAT)

Why she's on the list: In her role with NEAT, Peterson has championed the North End of Middletown, helping to transform the neighborhood and leading efforts to create successful community programs including a farmers' market and the city's first gun buy-back, where more than 100 weapons came off the streets. The mother of three also coordinates the Oddfellows Playhouse outreach to at-risk youth, among her other civic engagements.

JOSHUA WESTBROOK, 32, HARTFORD

Artisan shoemaker/owner, The Brothers Crisp

Why he's on the list: The grandson of a prosecutor and judge, Westbrook always wanted to work with his hands and has always loved shoes. He decided to "go for it," and set off for artisan shoemaking school in Oregon. Now he has a studio in a former industrial space in the Parkville section of Hartford and is making high-end shoes by hand, translating an old New England tradition into hip 21st-century style and attracting devoted clients like a doctor in Singapore. What's next? "If I could tan my own hides I'd do it," Westbrook says.

AMY KUNDRAT, 35, BETHEL

Director of New Media at Yale School of Management/executive editor CTbites

Why she's on the list: Kundrat's polymathic talents hardly fit on any "occupation" line. In addition to her Yale "day job," she's a devout foodie who is Executive Editor and a partner in the vibrant Fairfield County food scene website CTbites, author of "Fairfield County Chef's Table" and founder of her own new media and branding enterprise, ARK Projects. She's also led product launches for the *Financial Times* and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and served as a director of external affairs in the nonprofit sector for museums, including the Philip Johnson Glass House in New Canaan and Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield.

JULIE DALY MEEHAN, 31, HARTFORD

HYPE executive director/director of investor engagement and digital media

Why she's on the list: Meehan works for the MetroHartford Alliance, which is the leading business and economic development organization in Connecticut's capital region. Meehan is also executive director of the Hartford Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs group. In 2014 Meehan was promoted, via the addition of a second role, and is now responsible for developing social media strategies to strengthen all the MetroHartford Alliance initiatives, including the Connecticut Health Council and the Connecticut Insurance and Financial Services Cluster.

BENJAMIN PALETSKY, 36, MORRIS

Farm entrepreneur/Morris Marketplace founder

Why he's on the list: Paletsky is focused on highlighting the uniqueness and emerging potential of Connecticut agriculture in a way that stresses the importance of local flavors and integrity while also making learning and eating well fun for families. Branded as South Farms, he developed a farmland business model with a weekly farmers' market component that's attracting a diversified portfolio of entrepreneurial businesses in food, agriculture, tourism, entertainment and services. Paletsky's business acumen and his family's deep roots in Connecticut agriculture make this project a natural progression of his talents.

BEN POLLARD

T.J. CLYNCH, 30, HARTFORD

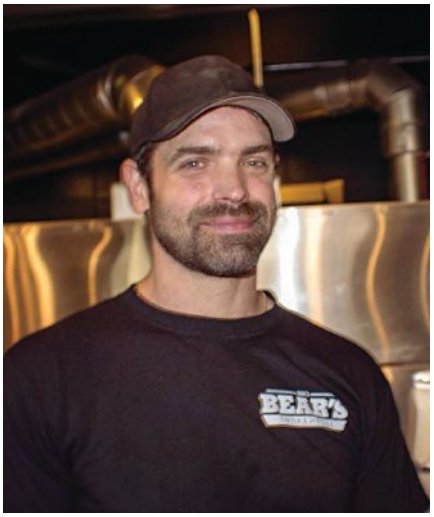
Founder of Civic Mind Studios & Downtown Yoga

Why he's on the list: Clynch is on a mission to revitalize our capital city. Between his two companies (the yoga studio grew out of the design firm) he works to introduce people to new areas of the city (hosting yoga at the public library for instance). Other projects include the open air market on Pratt Street, Hartford HodgePodge; the city's first green cycling studio, Cycled Energy; and an Earth Day celebration.

KATE LINDSAY, 36, HARTFORD

Attorney

Why she's on the list: In addition to her caseload as an attorney with Bracewell & Giuliani, Lindsay has taken on pro bono work and worked with survivors of domestic violence. The lifelong state resident and UConn grad has also been a part of clinics to provide legal service to the homeless of Hartford as well as in efforts for fair housing and immigration.



JAMIE McDONALD, 38, WINDSOR

Restaurant owner

Why he's on the list: The young restaurateur's new ventures, Bear's Smoked Barbecue, in Windsor and Hartford, lit up the Connecticut food scene in the past year earning praise from *The New York Times* and just about anybody who sunk their teeth into the Kansas City-style barbecue served at the restaurant. McDonald is also a competitive eater. His personal record: 287 chicken wings in half an hour.

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Famed aviatrix Amelia Earhart was married in Connecticut, but it was far from a classic love story

'Love' Takes Flight in Noank

MSP 9, THE GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM COLLECTION OF AMELIA EARHART PAPERS, COURTESY OF PURDUE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

by TOM VERDE

"Aviation Pioneer Amelia Earhart married George P. Putnam here in Noank, Connecticut, February 17, 1931" reads the carved, wooden plaque on the front of the old Latham/Chester general store, now a property of the Noank Historical Society. The memorial was donated, its dedication notes, in June 2010 "by the navigators of NavList," a group of celestial navigators.

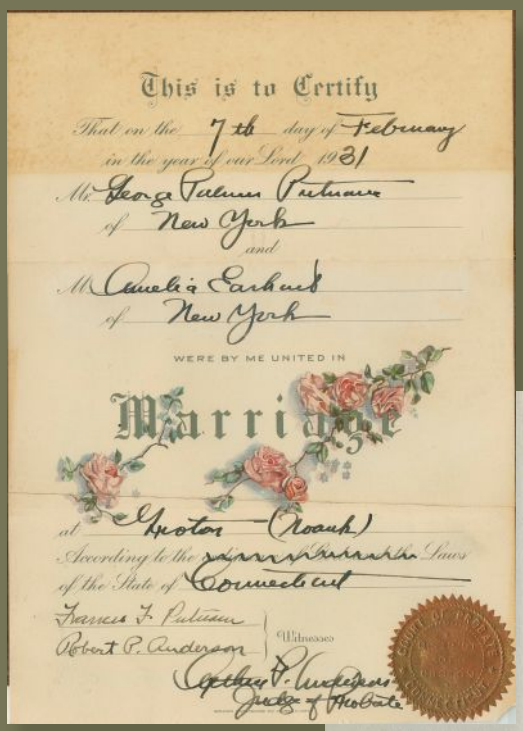
Like so much of Earhart's fascinating life, these seemingly straightforward facts raise more questions than they answer. Why did the famously independent, proto-feminist Earhart, who derided marriage as a "cage," marry Putnam, of the famous publishing family, and why in the tiny fishing village of Noank? And why would an organization devoted to the ancient science of celestial navigation dedicate a memorial to a figure from the comparatively modern field of aviation?

The answers to these and other questions about Earhart's Connecticut connections are not nearly as elusive as the ultimate mystery of her disappearance.

Putnam, grandson and namesake of the publishing company's founder, first met Earhart in 1928 when he was searching for a woman pilot to be the first to fly across the Atlantic, albeit with a male flight crew at the controls. A year earlier, Putnam hit the jackpot by publishing *We*, Charles Lindbergh's best-selling account of his historic solo flight from New York to Paris. "[A] skilled conjuror . . . with a knack for showmanship" who could "pull a best seller out of his hat," as one contemporary observed, Putnam realized that if he could publish the story of the first woman to make the journey, he would score another blockbuster.

After considering several candidates, Putnam finally found the perfect person: young Amelia Earhart. At the time, Earhart was working in relative obscurity as a social worker in Boston, a job she'd taken to subsidize her passion for flying. Born in Atchison, Kansas, in 1897 to a comfortably middle-class family, she learned to fly at the age of 23 in California.

"By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground," she wrote of her first time up in a plane, "I knew I had to fly."



This is to Certify

That on the 7th day of February

in the year of our Lord 1931

Mr. George Palmer Putnam

of New York

and

Mrs. Amelia Earhart

of New York

WERE BY ME UNITED IN

Marriage

at Noroton (Noank)

According to the Laws

of the State of Connecticut

James F. Putnam

Robert P. Anderson

Witnesses

Luther P. Anderson

Judge of Probate

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PHOTOGRAPHER: STEPHEN B. LEE

Earhart's straightforward prenuptial agreement (right)—and the proof (above) its terms were accepted, hardly tell a tale of true romance. The site of the brief marriage ceremony was a house owned by Putnam's mother in quaint Noank (top right—1941 photo).

Noank
Connecticut

The Square House
Church Street

Dear GPP

There are some things which should be writ before we are married -- things we have talked over before -- most of them.

You must know again my reluctance to marry, my feeling that I shatter thereby chances in work which means most to me. I feel the move just now as foolish as anything I could do. I know there may be compensations but have no heart to look ahead.

On our life together I want you to understand I shall not hold you to any midaevil code of faithfulness to me nor shall I consider myself bound to you similarly. If we can be honest I think the difficulties which arise may best be avoided should you or I become interested deeply (or inpassing) in anyone else.

Please let us not interfere with the others' work or play, nor let the world see our private joys or disagreements. In this connection I may have to keep some place where I can go to be myself, now and then, for I cannot guarantee to endure at all times the confinement of even an attractive cage.

I must exact a cruel promise and that is you will let me go in a year if we find no happiness together.

I will try to do my best in every way and give you that part of me you know and seem to want.

A.E.

LETTER (RIGHT) AND CERTIFICATE (INSET): MSP 9, THE GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM COLLECTION OF AMELIA EARHART PAPERS. COURTESY OF PURDUE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Though engaged since 1923 to chemical engineer Sam Chapman, Earhart kept putting off the wedding (and declined to wear an engagement ring) because she knew that Chapman would ground her once they were married.

Earhart's initial meeting with Putnam did not go well . . . at first. The busy publisher kept her waiting outside his office for an hour. When finally ushered into his presence, she was "as sore as a wet hen," Putnam later recalled.

"I just didn't like him," Earhart recollected. She found Putnam brusque and rude, taking "one phone call after another" during their interview. Yet, by the end of the meeting, she "recognized his tremendous power of accomplishments and immediately respected his judgment."

Despite her manner, Putnam realized within minutes that Earhart was not only the right woman for the job, but a potential goldmine of publicity with her slender frame, bobbed golden-brown hair and freckle-faced good looks. He also noted her vague resemblance to Lindbergh and reputedly coined the nickname "Lady Lindy" (which she hated), flooding the media with carefully orchestrated publicity shots of her in a masculine flying outfit.

The historic flight left Newfoundland on June 17 and touched down in Wales 20 hours and 49 minutes later. Although Earhart sourly compared her role as passenger to that of "a sack of potatoes," it made her world-famous, just as Putnam planned. He invited her to stay with him and his wife Dorothy at their home in Rye, N.Y., to write the story of her transatlantic flight. (Putnam and his secretary actually wrote most of the book, which he titled *20 Hours and 40 Minutes*, shaving nine minutes off the actual flight time because he thought it sounded snappier.) It was around this time that Earhart and Putnam probably began an affair, under the nose of Dorothy, whom Earhart considered a close friend. (No saint herself, Dorothy was allegedly having her own affair with her son's tutor.)

Eventually, Dorothy packed her bags and left one afternoon during a barbecue party. Even as movers carried his wife's trunks out the front door, Putnam remained on the patio out back, one guest recalled, "gaily spearing hot dogs for a shy young aviatrix named Amelia Earhart." Dorothy soon filed for divorce, on the pro-forma grounds of "failure to provide." Earhart, meanwhile, had broken her engagement to Chapman the year before. Questioned by reporters about future matrimonial plans, the famous flyer coyly responded, "[Y]ou never can tell. If I was sure of the man I might get married tomorrow."

Yet writing to a friend, she confided: "I am still unsold on marriage . . . I may not ever be able to see [it] except as a cage until I am unfit to work or fly or be active."

True to her word, Earhart devoted her energies to aviation. She became the first woman to fly solo across the continental U.S. and back, set new altitude records, and gave lectures promoting flying in general, and women pilots in particular. Meanwhile, her picture appeared on the covers and in the pages of the most popular magazines of the day, an image meticulously crafted by Putnam.

Earhart wrote one friend: "I am still unsold on marriage . . . I may not ever be able to see [it] except as a cage until I am unfit to work or fly or be active."

"Your hats! They are a public menace. You should do something about them when you must wear them at all," he fired off in a letter. He coached her on how to smile for the camera, advising her to conceal the gap in her front teeth by keeping her lips closed, and how to walk and talk during lectures: "You will have a tendency to turn your back to the audience . . You really have to remember always to talk into the microphone . . . Remember too your tendency is to let your voice drop at the end of sentences." He was also just as determined to make the nuptial-averse Earhart his wife.

While Putnam worked tirelessly to "solidify [Earhart's] position as America's foremost woman aviator," he was just as determined to make Earhart his wife. By his own account, she rejected at least two of his proposals. Other sources list as many as five. According to Earhart biographer Jean L. Backus, Earhart finally agreed to number six in October 1930. The setting, if not exactly romantic, was appropriate: the Lockheed aircraft factory in Burbank, Calif.

Earhart did not want any publicity on the engagement and, for once, Putnam kept his mouth shut, possibly fearing that if the news leaked, Earhart might call off the whole thing. He did, however, invoke one sacred privilege familiar to many a newly engaged man: taking his girl home to meet Mom.

Widowed at 58, Frances (Faulkner) Putnam had wanted a quiet, out-of-the-way place to live after the death of her husband, removed from the New York scene yet within easy reach of it. She had purchased an Italianate summer home known as The Square House on Church Street in Noank in May 1930. Quietly slipping in and out of Noank, Putnam and Earhart visited Frances periodically that year, without too much fuss.

"Noankers have told me that they used to see her on the street in town or in the post

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Amelia Earhart and her mother-in-law, Frances F. Putnam, in Noank,1931.

office, and that she was always very friendly and said hello," says Noank Historical Society Curator Mary Anderson.

On one such visit, on November 8, 1930, Earhart and Putnam applied for a marriage license at the Groton Town Hall. The document, still on record at the town clerk's office, was signed by Probate Judge Arthur Anderson, who waived the five-day waiting period of "intention" required by state law, and decreed that "the intended marriage . . . be celebrated right away."

But Earhart, who thought nothing of climbing to record altitudes in open-cockpit planes, froze at the idea of finally getting married.

"She just wanted to think about the whole thing more," recalled Anderson's son, the late federal judge Robert P. Anderson in a 1976 interview. "She had dedicated herself to the business of flying and she was anxious to retain her individuality."

Anderson went on to say that Earhart "was very devoted to George" but feared that "changing her name somehow would diminish her stature." The couple visited Judge Anderson's home, as Robert's younger brother, William, then a teenager, recalled in 1989. Shooed out of the room, William nonetheless remembered Earhart's pensiveness as she asked the judge if she could retire to his study to have a cigarette and think things over.

"When she came out, she had decided against it," he said. Putnam, as Robert remembered, "was very considerate about it."

Not so the media, who had somehow gotten wind of the engagement. The wire services were buzzing with the story about the marriage license together with denials by Earhart that she and Putnam had wed.

"Sometime in the next fifty years I may be married," she snipped to reporters.

Yet Earhart's friends and relatives were neither fooled, nor pleased. Earhart's mother Amy objected to the match because of their age difference (Putnam was ten years older) and that Putnam was divorced. Putnam's ex-wife predicted, "They'll fight like cats and dogs in a year. She's stubborn and coldbloodedly cruel and she'll soon tire of his indigestion and rotten, vile temper."

On February 6, 1931, Putnam telephoned his mother to tell her that he and Earhart would be driving up that night from New York to be wed there at the house the following day. Putnam also put in a call to Judge Anderson, asking him to perform the ceremony.

The next day was clear and cold. There were no guests: just Putnam's mother and two witnesses: an uncle and Robert Anderson, at the time a 24-year-old lawyer. There was no time to arrange flowers, decorate the house, nor even buy a wedding ring (Putnam's mother supplied a platinum substitute), suggesting that Putnam was striking while the iron, and Earhart's willingness, were hot. Just before the judge arrived, Earhart handed Putnam a two-page letter, written on stationery from the "The Square House, Noank, Connecticut." In it, she spelled out the terms of what today would be considered a prenup, "brutal in its frankness" as Putnam later wrote, "but beautiful in its honesty."

"There are some things which should be writ before we are married," it began. "You must know again my reluctance to marry, my feeling that I shatter thereby chances in work which mean most to me . . . I want you to understand that I shall not hold you to any medieval code of faithfulness to me, nor shall I consider myself bound to you similarly . . . Please let us not interfere with the other's work or play [and] I will try to do my best in every way and give you that part of me you know and seem to want."

It was a five-minute civil ceremony in which Earhart had the word "obey" stricken from the vows. As Judge Anderson congratulated the bride, he addressed her as Mrs. Putnam. When she responded, "Please, sir, I prefer Miss Earhart," the judge bristled, turned on his heels, and left.

Within an hour of the marriage announcement, reporters were crawling all over Noank.

Earhart wired a quick telegram to her sister after the ceremony: "OVER THE BROOMSTICK WITH GP TODAY," referring to the old African-American slave marriage custom. "BREAK NEWS GENTLY TO MOTHER." For his part, Putnam telephoned his secretary on his way out the door and asked her to release the news. Within an hour, reporters were crawling all over Noank, hunting for the newlyweds who had long since fled.

The village postmistress told reporters she knew nothing about a wedding that day, while it was left to Putnam's mother to issue the briefest of statements on her doorstep, saying her son and daughter in-law "didn't tell me where they were going so that I shouldn't be able to tell you."

In the absence of any hard—or at least juicy—facts, the papers simply massaged the story to add color. The ceremony, *The New York Times* reported, took place before "a crackling fire" in the classic "New England home overlooking Long Island Sound."

Paul Bates, current owner of the house, continues to smirk at such folklore. "There never has been a fireplace in this house, and can you see the water from here?" he asks, gesturing to the cluster of houses along the street that have long blocked the water view.

Bates also likes to tell the story of a local real estate agent who tried to start the rumor that Earhart's (nonexistent) wedding reception took place in a somewhat grander mansion just down the street. Locals also chuckle at depictions of Putnam and Earhart taking long walks down Noank's sandy beach, a topographical feature that the hilly, rockbound coastal village lacks.

A year after her marriage, Earhart made her own solo flight across the Atlantic, and, in 1936, began planning a round-the-world trip for the following year. On July 2, 1937, she and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared during the final leg of the journey somewhere over the Pacific Ocean while searching for Howland Island. The role of Noonan on the flight is the final piece of the puzzle behind the Noank plaque, as NavList founder Frank Reed explains.

"Earhart was not a celestial navigator, which is why she needed Noonan on the flight," he says. Flying over great expanses of ocean, Reed explains, is different than flying over land, where pilots can visually pick a spot on the horizon and head for it.

"Howland Island was this tiny speck, which they needed precise measurements to find," he says. He speculates that cloud cover or some other weather factor likely contributed to the miscalculation, and ultimate crash, during Earhart's flight.

Because of its central location, and out of respect for Bates' privacy, the historical society chose to hang the plaque on the Latham/Chester store instead of the actual house where Earhart was married. Considering her desire to keep her private life private, and the fact that this five-minute episode in her life seemed far less significant to her than the many hours she spent aloft, the decision may be just what she would have wanted.

TOM VERDE

Great Dates

© ZHE VASYLIEVA/ISTOCK–THINKSTOCK

From the country to the city, indoors and out, there's romance to be found all across the state.

What do you do for Valentine's Day? Go out for dinner? Pick up flowers and bring home a bottle of wine? It used to be that lovers aspired to be very creative in orchestrating special-occasion dates meant to impress. That got us thinking about how easy it would be to put Connecticut's manifold amenities center-stage in some great dates this Valentine's Day. Here's some inspiration for some good, old-fashioned romance.

Arts & Culture, New Haven Style

Remember when you were young and wanted to impress your lover with a tempting travel daydream? The romantic destinations you conjured surely included Paris, London and Venice. It's a voyage you can complete amid the cold Connecticut winterscape by building a great date around the exhibit **"Whistler in Paris, London, and Venice"** at the **Yale University Art Gallery** in New Haven.

Wherever you're arriving from, here's an itinerary for a magical day, or an overnight:

Without stressing, plan to "touch down" in downtown New Haven by mid-morning, the perfect time to alight at the **Belgian bakery Maison Mathis** for a pre-exhibit latte and croissant, or **The Green Teahouse** for an authentic Chinese tea experience and, perhaps, an early lunch.

After feasting on the Whistler exhibit—the first Whistler show of its kind for the world-class art museum—it's time for some self-indulgent shopping at the amazing array of clothing and specialty shops that are collectively branded as **The Shops at Yale**.

A post-shopping coffee or tea experience is always in order—try **Atticus Bookstore Café** for a unique experience or take a stroll to the incomparable **Blue State Coffee** on Wall Street.

As twilight falls, a brisk walking tour of the Yale campus (find the **Beineke Library** and the **Alexander Calder sculpture** in the courtyard) is truly romantic—and it helps work up an appetite to experience what may be New Haven's greatest strength, its world famous pizza places and fine dining restaurants. There are so very many we love, but for French head to **Union League Café**, for Spanish it's **Barcelona** or **Olea**, for true Italian **Basta Trattoria, Goodfellas, l'Orcio** and the new Mario Batali-branded **Tarry Lodge**, and for pizza **Pepe's, Modern, Sally's** and the off-the-radar insider's choice, **Da Legna**.

After such a satisfying day, who wants to drive home? Why not stay the night in sophisticated luxury at **The Study at Yale** and enjoy more of New Haven before heading home the next day.

Winter Fun

Sure there's plenty of skiing to be found in Connecticut—ice-skating is out there, albeit harder to find, which is a shame—but when it comes to a marriage of winter fun and romance, our state offers an option that trumps all others. It's an authentic, old-fashioned horse-drawn sleigh ride o'er the fields and through the woods.

Several farms and venues offer sleigh rides (a blanket of snow is necessary, of course, and unlike at the ski slopes this has to be natural whiteness), and two of the best are **Loon Meadow Farm** in Norfolk and **Allegra Farm & Horse-Drawn Carriage & Sleigh Museum** in East Haddam.

"Our antique lap robes will keep you cozy as you relax to the sound of sleigh bells jingling," the Loon Meadow website explains. "Our two-passenger antique surrey sleigh, drawn by a single horse, is perfect for couples, while our larger sleigh drawn by two horses will accommodate up to 10 if all adults, a few more if children. Your horse-drawn sleigh ride throughout our 20-acre farm begins at our stable yard. Glide over the fields and through the woods, from there the horses know the way to carry the sleigh, back to the barn where a steaming cup of hot mulled cider awaits you!"

Allegra Farm & Horse-Drawn Carriage & Sleigh Museum is a Connecticut treasure that has participated in movies like Amistad, Time Machine, Kate and Leopold, and The Buccaneers by the BBC, and its carriages, wranglers and horses have appeared on the television shows "Ed," "Sex in the City" and

> "Romance is the glamour which turns the dust of everyday life into a golden haze."
>
> — *Carolyn Gold Heilbrun*

the "Today Show."

Once you've enjoyed a sleigh ride and discovered the richness of the past brought back to life, it's time to move on to warmer experiences.

From Loon Meadow, a best bet is to transition to dinner and a show at **Infinity Music Hall & Bistro**, also in Norfolk. **The Irish Comedy Tour** is at Infinity on Feb. 13 and **Average White Band** is there Feb. 21. If you want to make it an overnight, the **Manor House Inn** or **Mountain View Inn** in town are lovely country lodgings.

Or you can book a "magical, winter wonderland escape at the **Interlaken Inn, Resort & Conference Center** in Lakeville, its **"Dashing Through the Snow" Sleigh Ride Package** includes a sleigh ride through the countryside, two dinner entrées for the price of one, deluxe guest accommodations, and breakfast for two the next morning. While in Lakeville, also be sure to dine at **The White Hart** (or stay there too), where British-born chef Annie Wayte has created a terrific gastropub menu.

If your sleigh ride is at **Allegra Farm**, there's a wealth of nearby fine dining in Chester, Essex and on the shoreline in towns like Old Saybrook. The restaurant **Fresh Salt at the Saybrook Point Inn & Spa** even has fireside dining; what's more perfect than that after a sleigh ride through a cold, wintry landscape?

Stay at Saybrook Point to keep the romance going, or for a more historic and intimately styled option, stay at the **Boardman House** in Old Saybrook.

Outside Insider

"For my own part I prefer a winter walk that takes in the nightfall and the intense silence that erelong follows it," wrote James Russell Lowell in an 1890 essay. Amid everything that's happened in the 125 years since then we've seen the primacy of walking diminish greatly in general, and walking for pleasure amid the glories of all seasons diminish also. There's nothing as briskly refreshing, and as starkly beautiful, as getting bundled up and walking on trails and through fields on a winter's afternoon, steeping in the landscape as the light begins to fade and dusk comes.

One of the best places in Connecticut for a walk like that (or cross-country skiing) is the **White Memorial Conservation Center** in Litchfield, where the approximately 4,000 acres of nature preserves that ripple away from Bantam Lake are etched with some 35 miles of trails. Start at the nature museum at the heart of the conservation center, and make sure to find and traverse the magical boardwalk trail around Little Pond.

You'll leave White Memorial exhilarated, and nothing is more satisfying after that than a gourmet dinner at **West Street Grill** in Litchfield, **Community Table** in Washington and **Arethusa al Tavolo** in Bantam.

Make it a sybaritic experience by staying over at **The Mayflower Grace** in Washington or **Winvian** in Morris, and wrapping in some spa treatments the next day—that and some shopping in tiny but retail rich **New Preston**, a village of Washington. As they might say on TV, the walk is free, the whole experience is priceless.

Nightlife, Gold Coast to NYC

We know this is a great date because we know people who do it whenever time allows. What is "it"? An urban sophisticate's version of romance Connecticut-style with a bit of a "Sex and the City" vibe. It's as simple to describe as it is richly rewarding: Book a room at the **Delamar Greenwich Harbor** in Greenwich (on a Saturday, say), check in as early as they'll let you and then head to the train station for a short ride into Manhattan—to visit a museum, have dinner, catch a show and be back at your luxury waterfront hotel before the late-night TV shows come on. After breakfast the next morning, take advantage of the Delamar's terrific spa and also get in some shopping on Greenwich Avenue before heading home. It's the best way to experience New York City, we're told, and we'd have to agree.

The itinerary above makes us realize how much fun it would be to opt for any of a number of Fairfield County saturation experiences. For terrific culture, shopping and dining as part of a day trip or overnight, you could touch down in the **SoNo** section of Norwalk and never leave—except to stay over at the **Hotel Zero Degrees** in Norwalk. You could also book the **Delamar** in Westport as a base camp for exploring the terrific shopping and dining there, like the new restaurant **Vespa** or the Japanese noodle bar **Kawa Ni** from Bill Taibe of **The Whelk**.

Wine and dine

Wining and dining your beloved is a great date idea regardless of the time of year, but this winter four Connecticut wineries are teaming up for the **Winter Wine Trail**—a perfect excuse for a small romantic road trip, with wine at both ends.

Follow this itinerary exactly or reverse it depending on where you're coming from or where you plan to end up. Travel the Winter Wine Trail and get your passport stamped at

all four vineyards between Jan. 5 and March 29 to be entered to win more than $2,500 in prizes.

Start your date along the shoreline at **Chamard Vineyards** in Clinton. This idyllic winery has been growing grapes on its 20 acres since 1983. Sip some in the tasting room. But the best part? Chamard has an adorable French-inspired bistro, so start your day with a panini and a coffee before moving on.

Next stop, **Bishop's Orchards Winery** in Guilford (a mere 15 minutes away), best known for its specialty fruit wines pressed on-site from its own apples, peaches, pears, strawberries and raspberries. If fruity wines aren't your style, try the award-winning Chardonnay, Pinot Gris or Cabernet Sauvignon.

On your way to the next winery, **Gouveia Vineyards** in Wallingford (30 minutes away), stop into the American-style restaurant and lounge **J. Christian's**, built in a renovated 1920's bank on North Main Street. Comfort food is updated here with seasonal ingredients. And all the cocktails are made with fresh juice, for a refreshing break from wine.

Then onto winery number three, **Gouveia**, which took home top prize for its Cabernet Franc in the Big E Northeast Gold Wine Competition for Best Grape Wine in 2012.

The final stop on the Winter Wine Trial is **Paradise Hills Vineyard** (only four minutes away). Finish your whirlwind day of delicious wines with a glass of their Cayuga White or Chardonnay in the Tuscan-inspired tasting room, opened in 2011.

After all that tasting, you may be tempted to not drive and stay the night. Let the date continue by booking a stay at **The Wallingford Victorian Inn**. Called a "very special experience," by online reviewers, this property has a storied past and has been well maintained as a sweet bed and breakfast at the corner of North Main Street and Curtis Avenue.

A sweet retreat

While the state doesn't have an official chocolate trail (they really should with the number of delicious, homegrown chocolatiers around), you can make your own chocolate adventure by pairing a sweet spot with a dinner reservation.

Start a delicious date at the **Bridgewater Chocolate Factory Store** in Brookfield. The artisanal chocolates are made just steps from the front counter, filling the entire store with enticing smells. These handmade treats have been honored as a Northwest Corner hidden gem for decades, since Swedish native Erik Landegren opened shop in the 90s.

Hop in the car and drive to **Deborah Ann's Sweet Shoppe** in Ridgefield for a second sweet stop (only 25 minutes away). This shop takes you back in time, serving up homemade cream truffles, peppermint bark, fresh fudge, old-fashioned candy canes, homemade ice cream and much more.

We recommend dinner at either **Market Place Kitchen and Bar** or **Ondine**, both worthy eateries in Danbury sure to impress your date.

Market Place has lived up to its reputation as an elite farm-to-table restaurant serving a locally sourced and seasonally rotating menu to the foodies who flock there. The owners are clearly doing something right, opening their second location in Woodbury last November, just two years after launching the flagship restaurant.

If French is your fancy, Ondine, situated in a stone and stucco house overlooking **Margerie Lake Reservoir**, is the place. It's a contemporary twist on the classics à la carte, in a four-course spread or a five-course tasting menu.

To add a few more chocolate stops to your itinerary, start your date in **Norwalk** by visiting the **Chocolate Rain Shop** or **Chocopologie Café** before heading on to **Deborah Ann's**. Stop for dinner and finish your sweet trip in Brookfield.

Cooking classes

Learning something new is a great date plan for new partners or longtime couples, and joining forces in the kitchen to create a beautiful meal is always an intimate activity. There are several stores and schools around the state where you can take a cooking class with your sweetie. And why not make a day of it complete with shopping and dinner?

Sur la Table in Canton hosts different cooking classes throughout the month at their beautiful, industrial cook top visible through the large shop windows. Classes take place around 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. most days, making it a perfect addition to a shopping day at **The Shoppes at Farmington Valley**. Bounce around **J.Crew**, **White House Black Market**, **Loft** and other high-end retail stores before or after your class and then finish the date with dinner at **Abigail's Grille and Wine Bar** just down the road in Simsbury.

The **Silo Cooking School at Hunt Hill Farm** in New Milford has hosted an impressive roster of chefs including PBS's Sara Moulton and Master Chef Jaques Pépin. On Feb. 8, **Maria Sanchez of Sweet Maria's** in Waterbury will share her sweetest secrets in a Valentine's-themed cooking class. She will walk attendees through the recipes for her raspberry linzers, Nutella thumbprints and more. Admission is $90 and the class takes place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Start the date here and then move on to shopping in downtown New Milford before having dinner at the classic Italian restaurant **Tivoli**.

Learn how to purchase and prepare a delicious fish meal at **Aux Délices Cooking School** in Stamford on Feb. 25. (There are other classes in the coming months, too.) For $125 per person, you and your date will get a hands-on cooking lesson to prepare roasted cod in saffron broth, pan-fried trout over jasmine rice and stuffed whole red snapper with salsa verde. Sounds delicious! Before that, get some shopping in at high-end retail stores like **Armani Exchange**, **Coach**, **Michael Kors** and **Williams-Sonoma** in the **Stamford Town Center**.

Finally, plan a date around two February cooking classes at **The Fig Cooking School** in Hamden. You and your partner can learn how to cook **Classic Comfort Food** on Feb. 6 (the menu includes jalapeño guacamole, Heide's famous chili, sweet corn bread and chewy chocolate chip cookies sprinkled with sea salt) or a **Dinner in Burgundy** on Feb. 26 (featuring Gruyère gougères, coq au vin, sal-

> "Romance is thinking about your significant other when you are supposed to be thinking about something else."
>
> — *Nicholas Sparks*

ad frisée with lardons and dijon vinaigrette and cherry clafoutis). Both classes are $85 per person.

Mystic and the coast

The sea has long fueled romantic notions, so mixing together a few waterfront destinations in Southeastern Connecticut can make for a memorable experience.

The best way to start is finding deluxe accommodations on the water—**The Inn at Mystic** overlooks **Mystic Harbor** and **Fisher's Island Sound**, and offers turn-of-the-century charm with modern amenities. Some rooms also have woodburning fireplaces, oversized Jacuzzis and even balconies, perfect for watching the sun set together.

In addition to the seasonal, sea-inspired cuisine served at the **Harbour House Restaurant** at the inn, Mystic also has a number of terrific dining spots: **The Oyster Club** features fine farm-and-sea-to-table cuisine that changes daily based on what's fresh, local and available; **Red 36** is the quintessential seaside eatery, with wooden tables and wide decks, platters of fried seafood and gourmet treats; and the Engine Room draws crowds and mugs of craft beer, with more than 16 brands always on tap, in addition to a menu stocked with creative comfort food. And then there's always **Mystic Pizza** for those looking to recreate a little classic movie romance.

Historic downtown Mystic has a number of shops to visit, from **Bank Square Books** and **Mystical Toys** to **Scrapbook Cove** and **Stonewear Clothing**. If you love ice cream year-round (and we do!), the ever-popular **Mystic Drawbridge Ice Cream** is open weekends through winter.

If your notions of romance involve having the entire family together, **Mystic Seaport** celebrates **"Winter's Aweigh"** during President's Day weekend with kid-friendly activities, including winter working dog demonstrations, art projects, toy boatbuilding, nautical games and sea chanteys. Children under 17 are admitted free during the weekend, and there are also other exhibits to explore, including the last wooden whaleship afloat, the ***Charles W. Morgan***.

If this has you yearning for actual time on the water, on Feb. 15, the **Custom House Maritime Museum** in nearby New London invites visitors for a **seal-watching trip**—see the cute denizens of the deep frolic about the frosty waters of the Long Island Sound, all while snuggled aboard a heated boat (although dress warmly anyway).

Back to School

Some of us met our loves while in college, so one way to relive the birth of a romance is with a return trip to campus.

As the state's flagship university, **UConn** is where hundreds of Connecticut couples have spent significant time getting to know one another. Although those nights of initially meeting up in the dorm are done, you can get together for a show at the **Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts**. This month includes performances by world music stalwarts **Zap Mama and Antibalas** (Feb. 12); Broadway superstar **Audra McDonald** (Feb. 13); and maverick organist **Cameron Carpenter** (Feb 15).

One of the state's hidden gems is **The William Benton Museum of Art**, tucked away in the middle of the UConn campus. ***In the Paint: Basketball in Contemporary Art***—a perfect tie-in for any Husky fan—runs concurrently through March 29 with ***UConn Reads: The Omnivores Dilemma***, which focuses on the culture, politics and science of eating.

Speaking of eating, there are plenty of dining options within a short drive. **The Farmer's Cow Calfé in Willimantic** is known for ice cream but there's also wraps, sandwiches and paninis; the **Dog Lane Café** offers light seasonal fare, from grilled items to fresh salads, plus smoothies aplenty; and for craft beer fans, **Willimantic Brewing Co.** brews more than a dozen styles of beer each month plus 20 different craft microbrews on tap.

If you're planning on staying, it only makes sense to be in the center of it all, and that means the **Nathan Hale Inn**, which offers special packages that include tickets to campus events. Just off campus is the historic **Altnaveigh Inn and Restaurant**, which has a few cozy guest rooms in addition to three separate dining rooms.

Newly opened **Storrs Center** is a walkable retail and entertainment district featuring multiple restaurants, the **UConn Co-op Bookstore**, the **Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry** and **Pandora's Playground Tattoo, Piercing & Gallery**—a little ink to commemorate the date?

And of course, no visit to UConn is complete without a stop at the **Dairy Bar**—two scoops of Husky Tracks, thanks!

Romance in the Air … and Sea

For fans of military and transportation history—and we know you're out there!—Connecticut offers a pair of world-class museums dedicated to the spirit of adventure and innovation.

Just beyond the runways of Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks is the **New England Air Museum**, home to more than 80 full-sized historical aircraft, ranging from 19th-century balloon baskets and single-propeller planes to fighter jets and even a restored B-29 Superfortress. Other artifacts and significant objects are on display, and there is a variety of activities, demonstra-

tions and special programs. Upcoming open cockpit days—when visitors are allowed to climb into selected aircraft to experience a pilot's perspective—are Feb. 15 and March 15.

If all that aerial action gets you hungering for a meal that will keep you closer to earth, **Pho 75 Vietnamese Restaurant** is one of the most popular eateries in the area, while **Jonathan Pasco's Restaurant & Tavern** in nearby East Windsor offers regional specialties as well as pasta and seafood.

And if you want to "strike" while romance is in the air—**Bradley Bowl** is a fun, friendly destination and a former stop on the Pro Bowler's Tour.

Back in the day "watching submarine races" was code for finding a quiet parking place at night. In Groton, the submarines may not race, but it can still be a spot for a couple to enjoy time together—while exploring the USS Nautilus (the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, built and launched in Connecticut) and the rest of the **U.S. Submarine Force Museum**. See exhibits chronicling the history of undersea warfare, including a reproduction of the first-ever battle sub, the Revolutionary War Turtle, built by ambitious local inventor David Trumbull.

When you come up for air and food, there are multiple choices nearby. **Paul's Pasta Shop** is a short ways down the banks of the **Thames River**, and offers heaping servings of terrific Italian fare. For a little dinner theater, **Koto Japanese Steakhouse** is a hibachi-style eatery that also serves sensational sushi. **Octagon Steak House** dishes up high-end fare set inside the **Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa**, a perfect place to end your explorations and relax—perchance a couple's massage at the **Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa** is in order? It's on the premises. Sometimes there's nothing more romantic than a little pampering.

Brewery and the Beast

When it comes to romantic imbibing, beer usually takes a back seat to beverages like wine, champagne or cocktails, but with the opening of so many great craft breweries in Connecticut over the past few years, more and more couples are finding there is nothing more romantic than a hoppy IPA or freshly poured stout. As a result the line "Hey, honey, want to go to a brewery this weekend?" is becoming a more viable romantic suggestion. With beer-loving lovebirds in mind, we've built a craft-brewing getaway around a trip to Stratford's **Two Roads Brewing Company**, one of Connecticut's most popular breweries.

Get to the Stratford area early and begin the craft beverage drinking with a different kind of "brew" at **Source Coffeehouse** in nearby Bridgeport. This artisan coffeehouse offers the type of gourmet coffee you hear about in places like New York City and Seattle. If you've never had one, order a pour-over, a handmade specialty coffee must-try that is worth the wait.

From there, get into the eccentric, hipster craft beer mode by swinging over to the **Barnum Museum**, also in Bridgeport. The historic museum building has been closed since 2010 because of storm damage, but some of the most intriguing artifacts are on display in an adjoining building. It's an off-the-beaten-path temple of the odd and unusual.

Grab lunch at new Bridgeport favorites such as barbecue restaurant **Walrus + Carpenter** or **Fire Engine Pizza Co.**, both of which have excellent craft beer selections.

Make sure to leave extra time for your trip to the brewery itself. Two Roads is one of the largest and most impressive brewing facilities in all of New England. The tours are detailed and interesting, and full of samples, of course.

For dinner, head to nearby Fairfield and stay true to the theme of the day with a trip to **Craft 260**, an excellent new craft beer bar and restaurant, or switch gears by going to **Brick + Wood**, an exciting new Italian restaurant that offers wine on tap.

Spend the night at **The Inn at Fairfield Beach**. Located across the street from Fairfield Beach, each room at this beautiful inn features a utility kitchen, living room area, private bath and a choice of balcony and/or fireplace.

Feeling Lucky

It's cold, it's snowing and winter has already lasted too long. Who cares? If you spend a weekend at one of Connecticut's resorts and casinos you'll forget it's cold outside as you warm up to each other at the card tables or slot machines, while simultaneously enjoying the many fine dining and entertainment options the resorts and the area has to offer.

At **Mohegan Sun** you can kick things off with an old-school diner style date at **Bobby's Burger Palace**. With its classic American décor this restaurant, owned by Bobby Flay, offers some of the best burgers and shakes in Connecticut and will help you relive your high school days, cue: soundtrack to *Grease* or *Jersey Boys*.

As evening approaches catch a show at one of the resort's state-of-the art theaters. February performances include **Fleetwood Mac** (Feb. 7), **Eric Paslay** (Feb. 14) **Aaron Lewis** (Feb. 20) and the **Average White Band** (Feb. 20).

At **Foxwoods Resort Casino**, couples can enjoy dinner at one of the most romantic restaurants in Connecticut, **Paragon**. This 24th-floor restaurant offers stunning views of the Connecticut countryside and a locally sourced, organic menu. With breathtaking sunsets and live piano music, it provides the kind of date you see in the movies. After dinner you can enjoy drinks in **The Scorpion Bar** or at **High Rollers**, a sophisticated lounge and bowling alley, which is reminiscent of New York City's Brooklyn Bowl.

Of course Foxwoods also regularly hosts live performances by top-end entertainers. Upcoming shows include **Lil Jon** (Feb. 10) and **Jim Norton** (Feb. 13).

After a weekend or day of gambling and carousing at the casinos some R&R might be in order and **The Spa at Norwich Inn** is the perfect place to find true relaxation. This hotel and spa offers 37 treatment areas and an attentive staff that will pamper you with traditional massage therapies, hand and foot therapies, facial therapies, body treatments and skin care enhancements.

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Olea is vibrant, be it the gazpacho or the winter mojito.

Sizzling and Sophisticated

BY ELISE MACLAY

NEW HAVEN'S OLEA IS A HIT FOR CHEF/OWNER MANUEL ROMERO.

Olea ★★★★
New Haven

When Ibiza in New Haven closed last spring, Connecticut lost a culinary treasure. Located on High Street, steps away from two famous art museums, it was itself a work of art, showcasing the best of modern Spanish cuisine in the state and on the East Coast. Busy, buzzy, frequently bustling, with a mile-long list of intriguing tapas and a devoutly loyal customer base, it vanished suddenly, as if it had never been.

Rumors flew. Diners mourned. But within six months, the spirit of Ibiza rose like a phoenix in the same location but in a glamorous new guise, re-imagined and rechristened, Olea. When the doors opened last August, Ibiza fans were first in line. If they expected the same-old they were in for surprise, then delight. Ibiza had been colorful and playful in a Picasso-like way. Olea is suave and sophisticated in stylish tones of black and white and gray. Ibiza was a fun tapas bar. Olea is a world-class, full-service, Spanish restaurant—with a fun tapas bar.

What makes all of the above relevant is the food. One taste and the regulars knew all was well—better than well . . . *wonderful.*

When we arrive to do an in-depth review, we feel the same, and with good reason: Ibiza chef Manuel Romero is in the kitchen, this time an owner, cooking at the top of his game.

In order to sample as many dishes as possible, we ask him to create a tasting menu of tapas and miniature portions of platos and desserts, which he is happy to do. Allergies? No. And away we go.

Two of us know Spanish food well. Avi is an explorer, raring to go. Hallie is fifteen, timid but tempted. The first tapas to appear reassure her: Light, hot, crisply French-fried codfish balls, as small and round as marbles, plated with paper-thin slices of Spain's famous Iberian ham made from acorn-fed pork, aged 18 months. They disappear in a trice.

Ceviche mixto arrives next, perked up but not overpowered by aji amarillo, a yellow pepper sauce that packs none of the heat that cayenne, chili or jalapeño deliver. Made with bay scallops instead of sea scallops, silky little mussels, tender-crisp shrimp and the surprise tang of mango, this ceviche is unquestionably the best I have tasted in a long time.

We relax, and I, in particular, enjoy sybaritic servings of Grade A Hudson Valley foie gras with a passion fruit merillo "sandwich," apple-mango chutney and aged balsamic.

But we are not to go unchallenged and what comes next startles us all: Point Judith baby squid in squid ink—the blackest ragout I have ever seen and the mildest. Hallie pales. I suggest tasting the coal-black stew with eyes closed, which she does and murmurs, "It doesn't taste fishy at all." She's right, but settles for one bite. Avi, who has scraped his own plate clean, eyes Hallie's untouched portion. She passes it to him and he polishes it off, blissfully employing a crust of bread to sop up every drop of sauce.

Moving on to entrées, we like each one better than the last. My favorite is loup de mer served à la plancha (skin-on) with fingerling potatoes, tomatoes, capers, cauliflower soubise and puffed quinoa. Nothing is too much trouble for this kitchen and in this dish every

JEFF KAUFMAN

component plays a vital part, like musical instruments in a symphony.

In contrast, we also like a simple homestyle dish of Bacalao, featuring Nova Scotia cod fish salted in house, huge white beans (de la Granga), red pepper and eggwhite pearls.

Chicken tagine with medjool dates, preserved lemon, almonds and ras el hanout takes me on a trip down memory lane—to Grenada where I fell in love with Moorish cuisine and the dancing fountains of Alhambra. At its best, dining creates and brings back pleasant memories.

Here and now, while awaiting dessert, I realize that my comforting feeling of being in good hands owes in large part to the fact that Juan Carlos Gonzales and his wife Maria are running the front of the house with warmth and panache as they have since the day Ibiza opened its doors. Andrea, chef Romero's wife, is serving, describing and answering questions about the food, and now there's another family player on the scene—Juan Carlos' son Dan at the bar—at the moment mixing a cool Pisco sour for my friend Judy.

Ruminations cease when desserts arrive in a dazzling burst, like the finale of an Independence Day fireworks display. Torrija, the traditional Easter dessert of Spain, takes pride of place. A sort of Fench toast made with leftover bread soaked in milk, Olea's lovely version is made with caramelized brioche and tahini vanilla-infused milk with rosemary ice cream alongside. There's flan, of course, classic and perfect, served with passion fruit ice cream on a plate sprinkled with chocolate "soil" (chocolate cake crumbs). An unlikely mishmash of hazelnut chocolate ice

Chef/owner Manuel Romero continues to serve up delicious Spanish cuisine.

JEFF KAUFMAN

cream, flourless chocolate cake, crema Catalana foam and "peanut dust" is exuberantly delicious, and an intense, deep 65 percent dark bittersweet chocolate mousse seduces us nibble by nibble until it's gone. We float out the door. It's raining but who cares?

Every cloud may or may not have a silver lining, but Olea's rendition of Spain's celebrated *cocina vanguardia* is brilliant.

And we don't have to cross an ocean to enjoy it.

Olea
39 High St., New Haven
(203) 780-8925, oleanewhaven.com

Dinner: Mon. to Thurs. 5 to 9 30 p.m., Fri. and Sat. 5 to 10 p.m. Price range: appetizers $11 to $17.50, entrées $24 to $33, desserts $9 to $12. Wheelchair access. Major credit cards.

Ambition is the word at Moxie.

Moxie: Great Burgers & Potential

BY ROBERT RABINE

Moxie [mäk-sē] *noun. American slang for energy/determination/skill and know-how.*

You need all that and more if you want to survive in the rough-and-tumble Connecticut shoreline market, where new restaurants come and go with the tides. Enter Moxie the restaurant, located in a renovated house midway down Wall Street in Madison. It's an ambitious endeavor in every way. Industrial meets garage, kind of Boho Chic with raw wood and exposed metal, mindblowingly detailed, both inside and out—yet somehow a bit sterile, everything laid out too perfectly, like a restaurant design project at RISD.

Most of the action is in the back, at a long concrete bar with a well-thought out craft beer and cocktail list. The space is airy but gets noisy; in warm weather a garage door opens onto a teak deck. A small, plush dining room in front seats around 30, though some tables are much too close to the service station, which went completely unused for long stretches on one visit. As we languished in the dining room, most of the staff was blissfully resetting tables in the bar.

Chef Derek Seigfried earned his chops at Zinc in New Haven. It barely shows in his overall menu design for Moxie, which is way shorter, more American and much more relaxed. But his food is also much less vibrant. It seems as if almost everything that comes from the kitchen is brown in color.

Potato-leek soup was light and pleasingly bitter, but the highly recommended Fried Chicken Steamed Buns had no real flavor despite the muscular ingredients of pesto, red onions and buttermilk sauce. Buffalo cauliflower was tasty and not too hot, lightly battered with blue cheese and celery.

Tomato soup tasted of summer itself, neon-red, bright and fresh, without being saucy. The Greenhouse Salad consisted of smoked beets, goat cheese, toasted walnuts and a too understated lemon vinaigrette. Our Blue Caesar was crisp and cold, and both salads were finely presented and promptly devoured with a good Ponzi pinot gris.

Macaroni and cheese, or "Mac Crack," was ordered but never delivered. Fried brussels sprouts tossed with bacon and dried cranberries tasted dull, but a perfectly cooked burger came on an excellent bun with awesome fries doused in kosher salt and malt vinegar powder.

The frisée, grilled pear and blue cheese salad, a special.

Beautifully seared jumbo scallops were a fantastic foil for the chewy combo of faro, and braised bitter greens resting beneath. But the curried squash risotto was terribly acidic for some reason and went mostly uneaten, but nobody inquired why.

A rare strip steak was sent back and taken off the bill because it was mostly gristle (a chef should save the butt end of the strip loin

Table Talk

BY ELISE MACLAY

Neat is neat in more ways than one. If you like your liquor neat and your coffee black, you can have them that way—and a lot of other ways at a cocktail and coffee bar newly ensconced in the old Westport firehouse on Wilton Road. Open from 7 am to midnight 7 days a week, it serves java, booze and a carefully curated selection of hip food to match your mood whenever. Think steel cut oatmeal with cinnamon butter, bananas and raisins. Beef tartare. Maine Lobster roll. Think macchiato made with cold press coffee. Think Montenegro moonshine made with Redemption High Rye Bourbon, Montenegro syrup, mint and bitters. Night or day, name your pleasure. Coming up.

(203) 557-8956, neatwestport.com

When Bistro Bon Nuit in New Canaan closed after many years, **Boulevard 18** almost immediately opened aound the corner. No connection between the two. Bon Nuit was Old World, Boulevard 18 is new—what Parisians call a *neo-bistro.* While it occupies (somewhat anachronistically) a Greek Revival Style building with white pillars out front, Boulevard 18 favors flavor and popular appeal over authenticity. Kale salad with currants, almonds and Idiazabal and salad frisee with Roquefort and a poached egg appear together on the same mixed-bag-of-a-menu. As a result, any and every one can find something to like. What I like is the luscious deep-down delicious totally traditional French onion soup with melted gruyere on top. Bon appetit.

(203) 594-9900, boulevard18.com

for a well-done steak, not a rare one), and yet Seigfried is skilled enough to have an extremely deft touch with seasonings.

Desserts echoed the same inconsistency. A dish simply called Cookies and Milk was so cloyingly sweet that one single bite made my teeth hurt, yet the chocolate and banana bread pudding was light as air and not sweet at all, its fabulously crunchy crust adding real dimension.

A return visit a few weeks later offered much promise. It was bustling and service was more attentive, although nobody ever seems to know who ordered what. The soup hit the mark once again—roasted chestnut, velvety-smooth with hints of garlic, drizzled with chili oil for slow heat.

A beautiful frisée, grilled pear and blue cheese salad came with a wedge of vanilla-braised endive and crispy, fatty chunks of five-spiced pork belly. What at first seemed terribly overwrought turned into something transcendent with the first few bites. (The only problem was that our waitperson, who had a dirty towel tucked into his apron the whole time, failed to even mention it as a daily special; we overheard it being offered at another table.)

Moxie has already made its mark on the Madison dining scene, and is the hottest place around, but the hallmark of any good restaurant is consistent execution, regardless of price point. In that regard Moxie has a ways to go, but it's getting better all the time.

If chef Derek Seigfried and company live up to the restaurant's namesake, Moxie is set to become the new standard for shoreline dining in the near future.

Hits

- All Soups ($7)
- All Salads ($9-13)
- All Burgers ($11-14)
- Seared Scallops ($27)
- Fries ($5)
- Buffalo Cauliflower ($9)
- Chocolate and Banana Bread Pudding ($9)

Misses

- Strip Steak ($25)
- Fried Chicken Steamed Buns ($13)
- Butternut Squash Risotto ($19)
- Fried Brussels Sprouts ($5)
- Cookies and Milk ($7)

The chocolate and banana bread pudding.

WINVIAN

Whether or not April is the cruelest month as poet T.S. Eliot so famously wrote, February is definitely one of the coldest and most forbidding months in New England. Folks tend to hibernate amid winter's wrath—but we say, "Be brave and go out to enjoy wonderful dinners at Connecticut's fabulous restaurants." Are we crazy? Nope. We just know how many hotspots are literally hot—make that comfortably cozy—because they offer true, luxurious fireside dining.

Winvian

155 Alain White Rd., Morris
(860) 567-9600, winvian.com

"A remarkable experience unfolds each evening in the fire-lit 18th-century dining rooms of Winvian's renowned Litchfield Hills restaurant, where simplicity and indulgence artfully converge to create the ultimate fine dining experience." The words come from Winvian's website but we can personally vouch that they're gospel truth. Executive chef Chris Eddy's cuisine is nuanced and brilliant, and the wine selections paired with each dish are fabulous. It's a luxurious experience worth every penny—and in cold months the warmth of a real fire is a "free" luxury bonus. See the website for options and elaboration.

Harbour House at the Inn at Mystic

3 Williams Avenue, Mystic
(860) 536-8140, harbourhousect.com

It is often said that the freshest seafood can be found near the water, and that is certainly true at the Harbour House at the Inn at Mystic, which serves up a wide array of fresh, seasonal, local cuisine. From the seafood staples we all crave, including linguini and clams and Stonington scallops, to some less fishy options like wood-fired pizzas, gorgonzola-crusted beef filet and butternut squash ravioli, this restaurant has something for everyone. Chilled lobster, Ninigret oysters and Cherrystone clams can be included on their impressive raw bar. And it all can be enjoyed fireside during this time of year.

Fresh Salt

Two Bridge St., Old Saybrook
(800) 243-0212, saybrook.com

Although the large stone fireplace is the focal point of the dining room in Fresh Salt, pardon us if our gaze drifts past it and out the windows that overlook the picturesque confluence of the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. Boats come and go but the elegant dining experience here stays the same—American cuisine heavy on local seafood (from a bountiful raw bar to grilled Block Island swordfish) but also versatile enough to include burgers, chicken, veal and lamb. Plus, there's the adjacent luxury inn and spa, perfect for creating an entire romantic weekend escape.

O'Neill's Pub and Restaurant

93 North Main Street, Norwalk
203-838-0222, oneillsono.com

This South Norwalk pub is just about as authentic as you can get short of booking a flight to Ireland. O'Neill's Pub and Restaurant was opened by a true Irishman, Ollie O'Neill (where the name comes from), on St. Patrick's Day 1999, and has been serving traditional food and fun ever since—try the beef & Guinness stew, corned beef and cabbage or bangers and mash. (There's lots of variety if the authentic route isn't for you.) During the cold months, the restaurant is warmed by a beautiful fireplace making O'Neill's the perfect place to enjoy a pint this winter.

Union League Café

1032 Chapel St., New Haven
(203) 562-4299, unionleaguecafe.com

We've been craving the Marwin farm duck breast with sautéed Granny Smith apples, celeriac mousseline and Calvados sauce at Union League Café, and the grilled Spanish octopus with chickpeas, baby arugula and Romesco sauce—and everything else at this sophisticated French brasserie across from Yale in the best part of downtown New Haven. The food, wine and service are always fabulous, and at this time of year, especially, the ambiance of the dining room is perfect, with the "always lit" hearth fire there to "welcome you, your family and friends."

Here are some spots where you can warm your hands—and your heart—while you dine

Fireside Dining

The Griswold Inn

36 Main St., Essex
(860) 767-1776, griswoldinn.com

For more than 238 years, guests at the "Gris" have dined in the warm glow of the historic Inn's multiple fireplaces. Follow in the footsteps of your Connecticut ancestors and enjoy throwback New England classics such as Braised Short Rib of Beef, Chicken Pot Pie or Sticky Toffee Pudding. There is a fireplace in the lobby, the taproom and in multiple dining rooms. There are also several guest rooms with fireplaces for those hoping to ignite a flame of a different sort.

The Copper Beech Inn

46 Main St. Ivoryton
(860) 767-0330, copperbeechinn.com

Dine in sophistication and elegance at The Oak Room at the Copper Beach Inn. Enjoy dishes such as Crispy Skin Black Pearl Salmon, Roasted Duck and Veal T-Bone, all expertly prepared by chef Carlos Cassar, who uses locally sourced ingredients from farms like Starlight Gardens and Bomster Family whenever possible. The main dining area has an upscale ambiance, while dining in the sleek and beautiful bar area offers a more casual feel. As an added plus, the bar has a raised redbrick wood fireplace where guests can watch the flickering flames.

Redding Roadhouse

406 Redding Rd., Redding
(203) 938-3388, Reddingroadhouse.com

Located on a wooded, relatively quiet stretch of Redding road this charming bar and restaurant has the feel of an old country pub. Here guests enjoy hearty cuisine including giant steaks, extra thick chops and newly caught seafood. The intriguing space has a traditional fine dining room, casual pub and even a billiards lounge. No matter where you go it is hard to escape the glow of the many fireplaces—there is one in the bar, one that can be seen from both dining areas and even an outdoor fire pit that is lit throughout the year.

Inn at Woodstock Hill

94 Plaine Hill Rd., Woodstock
(860) 928-0528, woodstockhill.com

Tucked away in the Quiet Corner, the Inn at Woodstock Hill offers guests a classic romantic dining experience: think polished silverware, linen tablecloths and wainscoting aplenty, all set before a formal fireplace in a nearly 200-year-old country inn. Chef Eric Kalwarczk's menu features organic and locally sourced ingredients, and ranges from cashew chicken breasts and Key West dusted ahi tuna steak to New Zealand rack of lamb and filet mignon. If you decide to extend

TAVERN ON MAIN

WHITE HORSE COUNTRY PUB

your evening, the inn features eighteen well-appointed guest rooms, each with private bath and other amenities, including a few that have gas fireplaces—to keep that fire burning.

Tavern on Main

150 Main St., Westport
(203) 221-7222, tavernonmain.com

If you really are intent on having dinner by a crackling fire, Tavern on Main triples your pleasure with three brick fireplaces in its main dining room. A converted historic landmark nestled in downtown Westport, it features wood plank floors, large windows and an ambiance that transports diners back to the 19th century. The food is also traditional New England fare with a hearty brunch menu (petite filet mignon and scrambled eggs, anyone?) plus gourmet treats such as artisan cheese board and an extensive drinks menu with specialty martinis. In warmer weather, the outdoor patio is one of the most popular spots in town.

The Goose

972 Post Road, Darien
(203) 656-2600, thegoosedarien.com

Crab and corn chowder, fried green tomatoes with shrimp, grilled baby lamb chops—these are the kinds of body warming dishes we crave when the weather turns cold. The Goose in Darien serves them up, plus much more, in their elegant version of the classic American bistro. Opened in 2010 by husband and wife team Mike and Lynn Gagliardi (30-year residents of Darien), this tavern serves contemporary American cuisine with warm hospitality. In the winter, that warmth emanates from the restaurant's original fireplace, completely restored by the owners. They also fixed up the original bar, where you can get a number of cocktails and peruse their wine list.

THE GOOSE

The Mayflower Grace

118 Woodbury Road, Washington
(860) 868-9466, gracehotels.com/mayflower

It's lovely to have dinner in Muse by Jonathan Cartwright at The Mayflower Grace—delicious food from a branded chef who lives in Maine and excels with seafood in a stylish dining room overlooking a gorgeous landscape. But truth be told, the Mayflower's "hot" venue is The Tap Room. All the terrific wines, beers and drinks are here—of course—and the menu has so many options you can build an experience any way you like it, from small plates like hand-cut fries with truffle Parmesan to tempura-fried local oysters with remoulade sauce and beef tenderloin sliders, and main courses like house-made fettuccine with spinach, red grapes, Reggiano Parmesan and EVOO. The star is The Mayflower Grace Black Angus burger—that and the fireplace make this cozy space within a rarefied setting the place to be.

Bernard's Inn & Sarah's Wine Bar

20 West Lane, Ridgefield
(203) 438-8282, bernardsridgefield.com

It doesn't get any better than this: Bernard's Famous Cassoulet with rich (French) red wine, enjoyed by the fire at one of the best and most romantic restaurants in Connecticut. The dinner menu changes daily and the temptations are too many to chronicle here—and the ways to experience Bernard's are also manifold. There's also the more casual Sarah's Wine Bar upstairs, where you can pair the wine with something as simple and hearty as a three-cheese flatbread pizza, mussels Meunière or orange and rosemary lamb stew. There's also music presented on a regular basis at Sarah's, and other special events including wine dinners and a special Valentine's Day dinner.

Millwright's

77 West Street, Simsbury
(860) 651-5500, millwrightsrestaurant.com

"The menu of 'Inspired New England Cuisine' was an intriguing read studded with tantalizing hints of who-knows-what to come—nasturtium, cracklings, stonefruit jam, pecan purée, black trumpet mushroom crust," said our 2012 four-star review of Millwright's, hinting at chef Tyler Anderson's inventive nature. And so it goes, with foodies flocking to the gorgeous mill for Michelin-star type meals. If you want a bit more comfort, served two ways, head downstairs to the 1680 Tavern, where the menu offers things like chicken-and-dumplings, shepherd's pie and steak frites—and where the fireplace keeps you warm in the winter. Go on Tuesdays for $1 Blue Point oysters, or Thursday for $22 prime rib with horseradish cream and a baked potato.

Sloppy José's Mexican Restaurant

186 Hillside Ave., Milford
(203) 878-9847, sloppyjosesmilford.com

Sloppy Jose's looks like a lot of other neighborhood places, but folks from farther away come for the Mexican and Tex-Mex cuisine, and then leave messages on the Facebook page, like this one: "Our favorite Mexican place! Love the steak and pepper burrito, Acapulco salad, the creamy corn fritters, and, of course, the fried Oreos! For kids, my son loves the Mexican chicken and rice." If that sounds good, the picture of the Patrón tequila in front of the roaring fire will seal the appeal of making a road trip.

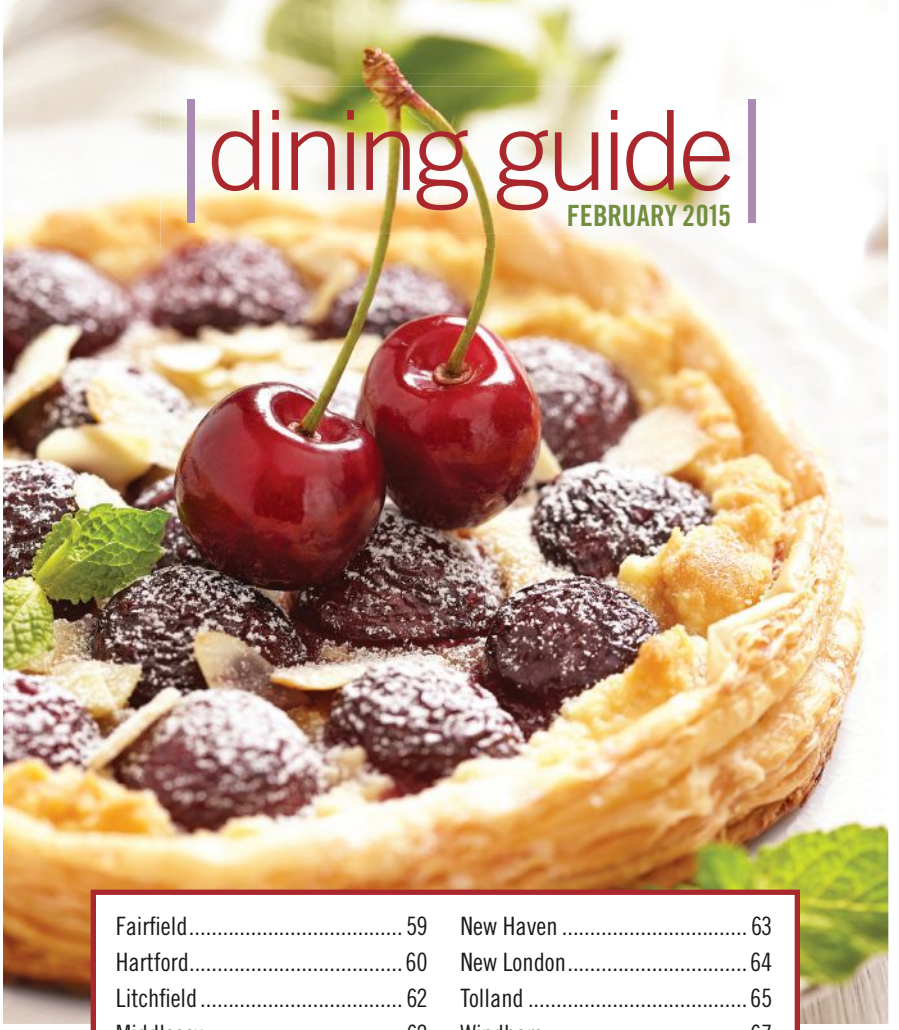
White Horse Country Pub

258 New Milford Turnpike, New Preston
(860) 868-1496, whitehorsecountrypub.com

The White Horse is the classic roadside country pub that you'd find in the beautiful countryside of England—except, luckily for us, this incarnation is located in the gorgeous Litchfield Hills. With a pretty little river in the back (with outdoor dining in season) and a display of flourishes inside that includes a guitar signed by the Rolling Stones and a vintage Indian motorcycle behind the bar, it's the go-to spot for great burgers, shepherd's pie and lots of other hearty pub fare, all of which can be enjoyed amid the glow of a roaring fire. If you haven't been, make haste to Sir Sean Connery's favorite pub in the U.S. (P.S., the Sunday brunch is just fab!)

dining guide

FEBRUARY 2015



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Fairfield County

Artisan • ***New England*** A farm-to-table restaurant with New England-inspired seasonal cuisine. • 275 Old Post Rd., Southport, (203) 259-2800 (artisansouthport.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • ***Spanish Mediterranean*** Cutting-edge restaurant serving Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 63-65 North Main St., South Norwalk, (203) 899-0088; 18 West Putnam Ave., Greenwich, (203) 983-6400; 4180 Black Rock Tpke., Fairfield, (203) 255-0800; 222 Summer St., Stamford, (203) 348-4800 (barcelonawinebar.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Bernard's • ***French*** Consistently serving perfectly executed seasonal entrées in an elegant country setting. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 20 West La., Ridgefield, (203) 438-8282 (bernardsridgefield.com). Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sun.) D SB, $$$, E, WA

Bloodroot • ***Vegetarian*** Offers a seasonal menu that might include Vietnamese summer rolls, the Bloodroot burger and Mexican mole. • 85 Ferris St., Bridgeport, (203) 576-9168 (bloodroot.com). Closed Mon. L (Tues., Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, $$, WA

Brasitas • ***Latin Fusion*** A gathering place for friends and family to enjoy exciting contemporary Latin Fusion cuisine, but with traditional accents. • 430 Main Ave., Norwalk, (203) 354-7329; 954 E. Main St., Stamford, (203) 323-3176 (brasitas.com). Open daily. L D $$

The Capital Grille • ***Steak*** Located in the heart of downtown Stamford this classic-style steakhouse serves dry-aged porterhouse as well as creative seafood dishes like citrus-glazed salmon. • 230 Tresser Blvd., Stamford, (203) 967-0000 (thecapitalgrille.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D $$$, E, WA

Cesco's Trattoria • ***Italian*** Chef Aldo Chiamulera's new restaurant is a sophisticated riff on an Old World country villa. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 25 Old Kings Hwy., Darien, (203) 202-9985 (cescostrattoria.com). Open daily. L D, $$$, WA

Coromandel Cuisine of India • ***Indian*** A wide range of tasty Indian fare is served in a small, tastefully done space. • 25-11 Old Kings Hwy. N., Darien, (203) 662-1213; Coromandel Bistro, 86 Washington St., Norwalk, (203) 852-1213; 68 Broad St., Stamford, (203) 964-1010; 17 Pease Ave., Southport, (203) 259-1213 (coromandelcuisine.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Dolce Cubano • ***Cuban*** A high-energy good time at this waterfront stunner. On the menu: Havana Buffalo wings, grilled oysters with tequila and sage butter and classic Spanish paella. • 78 Southfield Ave., Westport, (203) 817-0700 (dolcecubano.com). L D SB LS $$

Elm • ***American*** World-class chef Brian Lewis makes culinary magic here—with the freshest local, top-quality ingredients—in an elegant minimalist environment. And there's a great Sunday brunch. • 73 Elm St., New Canaan, (203) 920-4994 (elmrestaurant.com). Closed Monday. D SB, $$$, WA [★★★ 11/13]

The Fez • ***Moroccan*** In addition to excellent Moroccan fare—with small plates (kabobs, falafel salad) and large (slow-braised lamb shank, swordfish tagine)—The Fez serves up live music nightly. • 227 Summer St., Stamford, (203) 324-3391 (thefez1.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, $$

Fin • ***Japanese*** Specializes in fresh, imaginative sushi and authentic Japanese cuisine. • 1253 Post Rd., Fairfield, (203) 255-6788; 219 Main St., Stamford, (203) 359-6688 (fin-sushi.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

F.I.S.H. • ***Seafood*** This mod-elegant restaurant features a wide variety of excellently prepared seafood favorites and a special "Naked Fish" section of the menu that lets you choose your fish, how it's cooked and with which sauce it's topped. • 245 Bedford St., Stamford, (203) 724-9300 (fishstamford.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Thurs.) D, $$$, WA [★★★ 7/14]

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 238 Commerce Dr., Fairfield, (203) 333-7373; 59 Federal Rd., Danbury, (203) 790-7373 (pepespizzeria.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

Gabriele's Italian Steakhouse • ***Italian*** A throwback to the days of power dining, Gabriele's is large and luxe, and so are the steaks, which include filet mignon served on the bone, Wagyu and bone-in porterhouse. • 35 Church St., Greenwich, (203) 622-4223 (gabrielesofgreenwich.com). Open daily. D, $$$

The Ginger Man • ***American*** A New England-style tavern with 52 beers on tap (and 80 in bottles), burgers, brick-grilled duck and New York strip. • 64 Greenwich Ave., Greenwich, (203) 861-6400; 99 Washington St., South Norwalk, (203) 354-0163 (gingermangreenwich.com; gingermannorwalk.com). Open daily. L D LS SB, $$, WA

Joseph's Steakhouse • ***American*** Known for a New York-style steakhouse experience with gems such as prime dry-aged beef and its porterhouse steak for two. • 360 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, (203) 337-9944 (josephssteakhouse.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri. 12-3 p.m.) D (Mon.-Thurs. 5-9:30 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 5-10:30 p.m., Sun. 5-9 p.m.) $$$, WA

l'escale • ***French*** A stylish, romantic dining room overlooking Greenwich Harbor that serves superb Provençal cuisine. • 500 Steamboat Rd., Delamar Greenwich Harbor, Greenwich, (203) 661-4600 (lescalerestaurant.com). B L D LS SB, $$, WA

Market Place • ***American*** Featuring American farm-to-table cuisine, and a menu that is equally healthy, locally sourced, unique, and delicious. The food and drink menus change according to what is currently fresh from farms the restaurant works with. • 33 Mill Plain Rd., Danbury, (203) 616-5836 (marketplacedanbury.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Mezon Tapas Bar & Restaurant • ***Latin Fusion*** The menu features an inventive mix of Spanish, Latin American and Caribbean dishes, featuring locally grown and seasonal ingredients. • 56 Mill Plain Rd., Danbury, (203) 748-0875 (mezonct.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Ola • ***Nuevo Latino*** Fresh high-quality ingredients are knowledgeably prepared in-house. Nothing's too weird or outrageously expensive, the staff is helpful, the ambience nonjudgmental. • 694 Brooklawn Ave., Bridgeport, (203) 296-4884 (olarestaurantct.com). D WA $$

Ondine • ***French*** Serves classic French dishes such as duck foie gras with rhubarb-and-fig compote. One of the classic Fairfield County restaurants • 69 Pembroke Rd. (Rte. 37), Danbury, (203) 746-4900 (ondinerestaurant.com). Closed Mon.-Tues. D SB, $$$, WA

Rive Bistro • ***French*** Serves up the classics—steak frites, moules Provençal, croque monsieur, frisée aux lardons and tarte tatin. • 299 Riverside Ave., Westport, (203) 557-8049 (rivebistro.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$ WA [★★★ 7/13]

Tazza Osteria • ***Creative Italian*** Try favorites like grilled octopus, hanger steak, meatballs and brick oven pizza in a modern and trendy atmosphere. • 116 Post Rd., Fairfield, (203) 292-8810 (tazzaosteriabar.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat) D. $$, W

CONNECTICUT Magazine's restaurant listings are presented as a service to our readers. Information on specialties, prices, etc., was supplied by the restaurateurs. Space limitations in this guide prevent us from describing every restaurant in the state; omission is not intended to reflect upon the quality of an establishment. The listings include restaurants we know and love, and those recommended to us by our readers. Advertisers are guaranteed inclusion in the month they advertise. Restaurants reviewed after January 2013 are listed with our critic's ratings (poor; fair; ★ good; ★★ very good; ★★★ superior; ★★★★ extraordinary). Average entrée prices are based on dinner entrées: $—inexpensive (under $15); $$—moderate ($15-$25); $$$—expensive (over $25). This guide is updated regularly, but it is suggested that prices and hours be verified by phone. B (Breakfast); L (Lunch); D (Dinner); LS (Late Supper); SB (Sunday Brunch); E (Live Entertainment); WA (Wheelchair Access)

© AZURITA/ISTOCKPHOTO—THINKSTOCK

Uberti's Fish Market • ***Seafood*** Specialties include fish-and-chips, stuffed scallops, lobster rolls and deep-fried lobster at this seafood market. • 88 Ferry Blvd., Stratford (203) 377-1429. Open daily. L D $$ WA

Walrus + Carpenter • ***Barbecue*** Sink your teeth into the barbecue offered at this sleek new location in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport. The customer favorite is the Notorious P.I.G. • 2895 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport (203) 333-2733 (walruscarpenterct.com). Open daily. L D $$

Hartford County

Abigail's Grille and Wine Bar • ***American*** A completely remodeled 1780 tavern blending classic charm with upscale casual dining. Try Gorgonzola-topped pork chops or cedar-plank Atlantic salmon. • 4 Hartford Rd., Simsbury, (860) 264-1580 (abigailsgrill.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, $$, WA

À Vert Brasserie • ***French*** Owned by two chefs who in recent years have been making the Connecticut foodie world sit up and take notice, this restaurant offers beautiful food combined with imagination, perfectionism and zest. • 35 LaSalle Rd., West Hartford, (860) 904-6240 (avertbrasserie.com). • Open daily. L D, LS, $$, WA

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • ***Spanish Mediterranean*** Barcelona's newest location in a popular line of hip, European-style restaurants. • 971 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, (860) 218-2100 (barcelonawinebar.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, $$, E, WA

Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue • ***Barbecue*** Let your inner bear roar at these finger-lickin' good Kansas City-style barbecue joints owned by competitive eating champion Jamie McDonald. • 89 Arch St., Hartford, (860) 724-3100; 2152 Poquonock Ave.,Windsor, (860) 999-3834 (bearsbbq.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Carbone's Kitchen • ***Italian*** This casual-dining little brother to Carbone's Ristorante Italian restaurant was established in 2012. Like the original Carbone's in Hartford, this restaurant uses fresh and local ingredients to prepare old-school Italian classics. • 6 Wintonbury Mall, Bloomfield, (860) 904-2111 (carboneskitchen.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$, WA

Carbone's Ristorante • ***Italian*** This old school, fine-dining Italian restaurant was established in 1938 and has survived as long as it has for a reason. Dishes include lobster risotto, grilled veal chop and eggplant, chicken and veal parmigiano • 588 Franklin Ave., Hartford, (860) 296-9646 (carbonesct.com). Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.) D. , $$$, WA

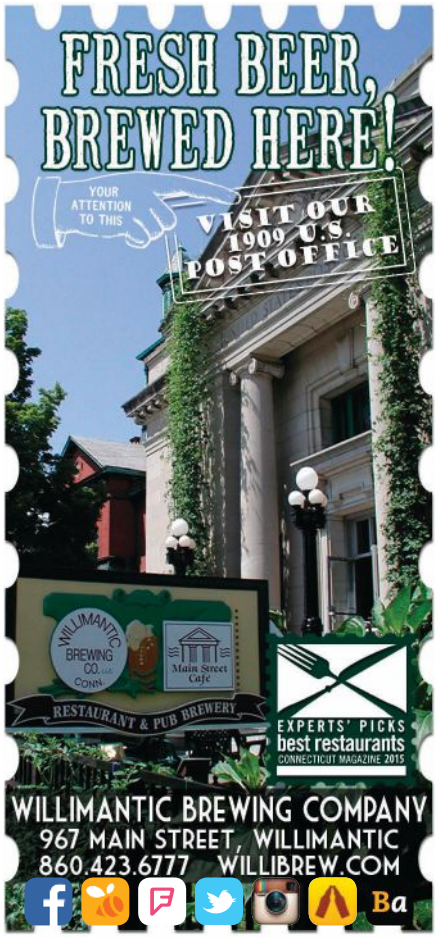
Firebox • ***New American*** Firebox boasts a seasonal, Connecticut farm-inspired menu including seared Stonington scallops and Connecticut farm-raised lamb. • 539 Broad St., Hartford, (860) 246-1222 (fireboxrestaurant.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$, E, WA

Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar • ***American*** A premier destination for prime meats and chops, fresh fish and poultry, with a sophisticated wine list. • Blue Back Square, 44 South Main St., West Hartford, (860) 676-WINE (flemingssteakhouse.com). Open daily. D, $$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, any pie here is worth the wait. • 1148 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, (860) 236-7373; 221 Buckland Hills Dr., Manchester, (860) 644-7333 (pepespizzeria.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

Grants Restaurant, Bar & Patisserie • ***Continental*** A West Hartford institution serving inventive dishes like braised lamb shank, pistachio-crusted Idaho trout and chocolate-caramel opera cake. • 977 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, (860) 236-1930 (billygrant.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$, WA

Joey Garlic's • ***Italian*** Enjoy New Haven-style brick-oven pizzas, fresh-ground burgers, grinders and pasta in a family-friendly atmosphere. • 150 Kitts La., Newington, (860) 372-4620; 372 Scott Swamp Rd., Farmington, (860) 678-7231; 353 Park Rd., West Hartford, (860) 523-5639 (joeygarlics.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA



La Trattoria • ***Italian/American*** Enjoy seafood linguine fra diavolo and tableside Caesar salad. Banquet facility on premises. • Rte. 44, Canton, (860) 673-5000 (latrattoriact.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri., Sun.) D, $$, E (weekends), WA

Little Pub • ***American*** Great food, generous drinks, seasonal menus and a lively pub atmosphere where you'll feel right at home. • 59 Ethan Allen Hwy., Ridgefield, (203) 544-9222 (littlepub.com). Open daily. L D $$

Max Downtown • ***American*** A Hartford mainstay featuring global cuisine, chophouse classics, a fine wine list and lighter fare in the tavern. *Wine Spectator* Best of Award of Excellence. • 185 Asylum St., Hartford, (860) 522-2530 (maxrestaurantgroup.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, $$$, WA

Max Fish • ***Seafood*** A lively, upscale fish house serving a daily selection of fresh seafood and great steaks. The Shark Bar is more casual, offering lighter fare and Max classics in an up-tempo environment. • 110 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, (860) 652-3474 (maxfishct.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, $$

Metro Bis • ***American*** The restaurant's got a lovely new home at Simsbury 1820 House, but the focus hasn't changed—classically grounded innovation, seasonally oriented and ever open to a playful riff or two. • 731 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury, (860) 651-1908 (metrobis.com). Closed Sun. L D, $$, WA

The Mill on the River • ***American*** Pan-seared Chilean sea bass and pork chop Milanese are tops at this former gristmill. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 989 Ellington Rd., South Windsor, (860) 289-7929 (themillontheriver.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, $$, WA

Millwright's Restaurant • ***American*** Tyler Anderson dazzled us for years at The Copper Beech Inn. Now, he's wowing all comers at this sparkling restaurant. • 77 West St., Simsbury, (860) 651-5500 (millwrightsrestaurant.com). Closed Mon.-Tues. D, $$$, WA

ON20 • ***Contemporary French/American*** Savor panaromic city views and sophisticated atmosphere along with sumptuous seasonal cuisine. • 400 Columbus Blvd., 20th Floor, Hartford, (860) 722-5161 (ontwenty.com). Closed Sat.-Sun. L D (Thurs.-Fri.), $$ (L) $$$ (D), E

Republic • ***Gastropub*** Handcrafted beers, boutique wines and small-batch bourbons are offered at this high-end pub. • 39 Jerome Ave., Bloomfield, (860) 216-5852 (republicct.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, $$ [★★½ 10/14]

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse • ***Steak*** Billed as "the steak that speaks for itself" the steaks served at the Connecticut location of this national chain are USDA Prime. In addition, the restaurant utilizes locally sourced produce in its recipes. • 2513 Berlin Tpke., Newington, (860) 666-2202 (ruthschris.com). L (Sun.) D $$$, WA

Salute • ***Italian/American*** It's like a classy party every night at this restaurant, where diners enjoy everything from traditional pasta dishes (including gluten-free choices) to giobatto, a robust chicken-sausage stew in a spicy broth served over fettucine. • 100 Trumbull St., Hartford, (860) 899-1350 (salutect.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$, WA

Tisane Euro-Asian Café • ***Asian Fusion*** The diverse menu is complemented by over 40 specialty martinis and other specialty drinks. Try the Far East nachos, wings trio, Tisane Cobb salad, noodle bowls and espresso steak. • 537 Farmington Ave., Hartford, (860) 523-5417 (mytisane.com). Open daily. L D SB, $, E, WA

Trumbull Kitchen • ***American*** "Global comfort food" is served at communal tables in the bar or individual tables in the dining rooms at this sophisticated city brasserie. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 150 Trumbull St., Hartford, (860) 493-7417 (maxrestaurantgroup.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, $$, E

Treva Restaurant • ***Italian*** Offers chef-inspired Northern Italian cuisine—bronzino, tagliardi and porchetta—in a warm, rustic and casual environment. Treva's mixologists create a wide range of cocktails. • 980 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, (860) 232-0407 (trevact.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB LS, $$

Vinted Wine Bar & Kitchen • ***Tapas*** This exciting restaurant in Blue Back Square serves 68 wines by the glass along with an ambitious small-plates menu. 63 Memorial Rd., West Hartford, (860) 206-4648 (vintedwinebar.com). Open daily. D, $$, WA

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The Willows • ***American*** A suave boîte in the DoubleTree Hotel helmed by star chef Leo Bushey III. On the menu: vanilla-poached lobster, pot-au-feu and pork tenderloin roulade with sun-dried fruit. • 42 Century Dr., Bristol, (860) 589-7766 (doubletree-bristol.com). Open daily 5 to 10. D, $$$, WA [★★★½ 8/13]

Wood-n-Tap • ***American*** Hip, fun eateries known for great burgers and great beer. You'll also love the pizza, pasta, salads and sandwiches. • 99 Sisson Ave., Hartford, (860) 232-TAPS; 1274 Farmington Ave., Farmington, (860) 773-OPEN; 420 Queen St., Southington, (860) 329-0032; 12 Town Line Rd., Rocky Hill, (860) 571-9444 (woodntap.com). Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

Litchfield County

Arethusa al Tavolo • ***New American*** This high-flying country restaurant serves sparkling dishes like butter-poached halibut with crab paella, rack of lamb and a glorious reinvention of Peking duck. • 828 Bantam Rd., Bantam, (860) 567-0043 (arethusaaltavolo.com). Open Thurs.-Sun. D, $$$, WA

Backstage • ***American*** Enjoy casual American fare prepared from scratch—salads and soups, creative small plates, hand-formed Angus patties on house-baked rolls—and 40 beers on tap. • 84 Main St., Torrington, (860) 489-8900 (backstageeatdrinklive.com). Open daily. L D LS SB, $$, E, WA

Carmen Anthony Fishhouse • ***Seafood & Steak*** Carmen Anthony offers an impressive variety of fresh-only seafood, big Maine lobsters (up to five pounds) and thick Black Angus steaks. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 757 Main St., Woodbury, (203) 266-0011. Open daily. L D LS, $$$, E, WA

Carole Peck's Good News Cafe • ***New American*** Chef Carole Peck offers original dishes like warm crab taco and chicken tagine. • 694 Main St. S., Woodbury, (203) 266-GOOD (good-news-cafe.com). Closed Tues. L D, $$

Community Table • ***American*** Chef Joel Viehland offers a seasonal menu using only ingredients grown, raised or foraged within a 200-mile radius. • 223 Litchfield Tpke., Washington, (860) 868-9354 (communitytablect.com). Closed Tues.-Wed. D SB, $$, WA

The Cookhouse • ***Barbecue*** "Slo-smoked" baby-back ribs and pulled pork are the name of the game here. • 31 Danbury Rd. (Rte. 7), New Milford, (860) 355-4111 (thecookhouse.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Gifford's • ***American*** Enjoy an American melting pot of a menu that features the flavors of Thailand, Tuscany, Vietnam, Morroco and France, as well as local farm fare. In winter guests can enjoy a fireplace, in summer they can eat outside on an awning-shaded dining terrace. • 9 Maple St., Kent, (860) 592-0262 (jpgifford.com). Closed Mon.-Tues. D, $$$, WA [★★½ 6/14]

G.W. Tavern • ***American*** A Colonial-style tavern with a cozy bar and live music on weekends. Serves seasonal all-natural foods, including steaks and fresh seafood. • 20 Bee Brook Rd. (Rte. 47), Washington Depot, (860) 868-6633 (gwtavern.com). Open daily. L D LS SB, $$, WA

The Hopkins Inn • ***Austrian/American*** A country inn with an Old World atmosphere known for wiener schnitzel, backhendl and fresh-caught trout. • 22 Hopkins Rd., Warren, (860) 868-7295. Closed Mon. B L (Tues.-Sat.) D, $$$

The Painted Pony • ***American*** This cozy spot offers a variety of dishes, from prime rib and steak to pasta and pizza. Live entertainment every Thurs. • 74 Main St. (Rte. 61), Bethlehem, (203) 266-5771 (paintedponyrestaurant.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $, E, WA

Pastorale • ***French/Mediterranean*** Housed in a 1760s Colonial, Pastorale uses local and organic ingredients in dishes like pan-seared Idaho rainbow trout, chicken paillard and moules marinière. • 223 Main St., Lakeville, (860) 435-1011 (pastoralebistro.com). Closed Mon. D SB, $$, WA

The Restaurant at Winvian • ***French*** Chef Chris Eddy constantly changes the menu, using simple and seasonal ingredients accented with unusual and fresh findings. • 155 Alain White Rd., Morris, (860) 567-9600 (winvian.com). Closed Mon.-Tues. L D, $$$, WA

River Bistro • ***Mediterranean*** Located on the banks of the Housatonic River, River Bistro offers fine Mediterranean cuisine with a Spanish accent. The house specialties include a variety of tapas and traditional paella. • 300 Kent Rd., New Milford, (860) 355-4466 (riverbistro.net). Closed Mon.-Tues. L (Sun.) D, $$, WA

Salsa Restaurant • ***Southwestern*** Salsa highlights Southwestern cuisine with house-made mild-to-hot New Mexican-style dishes, fajitas, quesadillas and house-made salsas. • 31 Bank St., New Milford, (860) 350-0701. Closed Mon. L D, $, WA

Scarpelli's • ***American*** Since 1936, Scarpelli's has been offering classic comfort foods like chicken parmigiana, meat loaf, fried chicken and fish-and-chips. • 865 Migeon Ave., Torrington, (860) 482-7977 (scarpellisclassiccatering.com). Open daily. B L D, $$, WA

Venetian Restaurant • ***Classic Italian*** Enjoy seasonal specials and traditional fare like house-made pasta, veal dishes, grilled lamb chops, and tiramisu and rum cake for dessert. • 52 East Main St., Torrington, (860) 489-8592 (thevenetianrestaurant.com). Closed Tues. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$, WA

The Village Restaurant • ***American*** A historic pub and restaurant in the heart of Litchfield. Veal Bartalucci, Parmesan-and-horseradish-encrusted salmon and cheeseburgers top the menu. • 25 West St., Litchfield, (860) 567-8307 (village-litchfield.com). Open daily. L D, $$

West Street Grill • ***New American*** An innovative restaurant with a star-studded clientele and menu to match. Serves wild fish, handmade pasta and organic salads. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 43 West St., Litchfield, (860) 567-3885 (weststreetgrill.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$$, R (on weekends), WA

The White Horse Country Pub • ***American*** Serves American pub favorites like burgers, ribs and seafood bake, along with some English ones—shepherd's pie, fish-and-chips and bangers and mash. • 258 New Milford Tpke., Washington, (860) 868-1496 (whitehorsecountrypub.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Yokohama • ***Japanese*** Delicious tempura and teriyaki dishes, plus sushi and sashimi. • 131 Danbury Rd., New Milford, (860) 355-0556 (yokohama-sushi.net). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Middlesex County

Alforno • ***Northern Italian*** Known for a great selection of house-made ravioli, including veal osso buco with fresh ricotta ravioli, butternut squash ravioli and wild boar ravioli, as well as tagliatelle Bolognese and arugula chicken. • 1654 Boston Post Rd., Old Saybrook, (860) 399-4166 (alforno.net). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Amici Italian Grill • ***Italian*** Features a relaxed atmosphere and a menu of seafood fra diavolo, filet mignon and chicken Milanese. • 280 Main St., Riverview Ctr., Middletown, (860) 346-0075 (amiciitaliangrill.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$

Angelico's Lake House • ***American*** Overlooking Lake Pocotopaug, Angelico's features great outside dining and a tiki hut. Try the spinach risotto, roast prime rib, stuffed salmon or lobster ravioli with sautéed shrimp. • 81 North Main St., East Hampton, (860) 267-1276 (angelicoslakehouse.com). Open daily. L D LS SB, $$, E, WA

Aspen • ***New American*** The menu at this sophisticated spot includes small plates (house-made tagliatelle, grilled flatbreads) and large—duck breast, rabbit, lobster pappardelle, Stonington sea scallops and more. • 2 Main St., Old Saybrook, (860) 395-5888 (aspenct.com). Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D, $$, WA

Boom on the Water • ***American*** Dine on the outdoor deck overlooking a sea of yachts. Favorites include fried oysters, filet mignon Oscar with crabmeat-sherry cream and BBQ duck quesadillas. • Brewer's Pilots Point Marina, 63 Pilots Point Dr., Westbrook, (860) 399-2322 (boomrestaurant.net). Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Chicago Sam's • ***American*** This beloved sports bar takes sports fanaticism to new heights showing every NFL, MLB, NBA and NHL game. When it comes to the menu this place is also a winner. The 70-item pub menu serves lunch till midnight and 20 seasonally rotating beers are on tap. • 51 Shunpike Rd., Cromwell, (860) 635-1860 (chicagosams.com). Open Daily. L D LS, $, E, WA

Coyote Blue Tex Mex Café • ***Tex-Mex*** The extensive menu includes the spinach-and-feta quesadilla, cattleman's steak and Southwestern stir-fry served over Mexican rice. • 1960 Saybrook Rd., Middletown, (860) 345-2403 (coyoteblue.com). Closed Mon. D, $, WA

Cuckoo's Nest • ***Mexican*** Housed in a 200-year-old barn, Cuckoo's Nest has been serving nachos, fajitas, Cajun shrimp and scallops for over 35 years. • 1712 Post Rd., Old Saybrook, (860) 399-9060 (cuckoosnest.biz). Open daily. L D SB, $$, E, WA

Fresh Salt • ***American*** Drink in the glorious water view while savoring cioppino, merlot-braised short ribs, osso buco and Block Island swordfish. • 2 Bridge St., Old Saybrook, (860) 395-2000 (saybrook.com). Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, $$$, E, WA

Gabrielle's • ***American Bistro*** Gabrielle's is an upscale bistro serving grilled tenderloin of beef, pan-seared scallops and pan-roasted fillet of salmon. • 78 Main St., Centerbook, (860) 767-2440 (gabrielles.net). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, $$, WA

Gelston House • ***American*** This historic restaurant offers unparalleled views of the Goodspeed Opera House and the Connecticut River. Entrées include pan-seared duck breast, filet mignon and lamb ragout. • 8 Main St., East Haddam, (860) 873-1411 (gelstonhouse.com). Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sun.) D LS SB, $$, E, WA

The Griswold Inn • ***American*** The beloved 1776 "Gris" features classic New England cuisine in the dining room, small plates and 50 wines by the glass in the wine bar, and a lively taproom. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 36 Main St., Essex, (860) 767-1776 (griswoldinn.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$$, E, WA

Hilltop BBQ • ***Barbecue*** Beer-battered onion rings, loaded chili, Memphis-style baby-back ribs and cornmeal-and-jalapeño-crusted catfish are just a few of the down-home choices here. • 12 Rae Palmer Rd., Moodus, (860) 873-1234 (hilltopbbqsteakhouse.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Haveli India • ***Indian*** Amidst traditional Indian decor, Haveli serves coconut soup, chicken tikka masala, diwani kebab, fish tandoori and the Haveli mixed grill. • 1300 South Main St., Middletown, (860) 347-7773 (haveliindia.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • ***Seafood*** This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 86 Boston Post Rd., Westbrook, (860) 669-0767 (ljfishtale.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Liv's Oyster Bar • ***Seafood*** Liv's is a stylish, small neighborhood restaurant housed in an old movie theater. Stonington sea scallops, wild salmon, organic chicken and heirloom vegetables top the menu. • 166 Main St., Old Saybrook, (860) 395-5577 (livsoysterbar.com). Closed Tues. D, $$, WA

Luigi's • ***Italian*** Enjoy classic Italian favorites like seafood cannelloni, chicken leonardo, veal parmigiana, whole clams, prime rib and other dishes in a warm, home-like atmosphere. • 1295 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, (860) 388-9190 (luigis-restaurant.com). Closed Monday (except in July and August). D, $$, WA

The Restaurant at Water's Edge • ***Continental*** Drink in the view of Long Island Sound as you savor fare like filet mignon and applewood-smoked Atlantic salmon. • 1525 Boston Post Rd., Westbrook, (860) 399-5901 (watersedge-resort.com). B L D SB, $$$, WA

Restaurant L&E/French 75 Bar • ***French*** Upstairs you'll find formal, elegant dining and a seasonal menu while downstairs offers a more traditional bistro experience. • 59 Main St., Chester, (860) 526-5301 (restaurantlande.com). Open daily. D LS, $$$, WA

River Tavern • ***American*** Farm-to-table pioneer Jonathan Rapp wears top toque at this town fixture. On the menu: made-to-order guacamole, grilled Stonington swordfish, New York strip. • 23 Main St., Chester, (860) 526-9417 (rivertavernrestaruant.com). Open daily. L D $$

New Haven County

116 Crown • ***American Tapas/Small Plates*** Dine on sliders, pizzettes and charcuterie and cheese in a loungelike atmosphere—along with exciting house cocktails created by mixologist John Ginnetti. • 116 Crown St., New Haven, (203) 777-3116 (116crown.com). D LS, $$, E, WA

121 Restaurant @ OXC • ***American*** Watch the planes take off and land at 121, located at the Waterbury-Oxford Airport. The menu runs from great pizzas and burgers to an eclectic mix of American favorites. • 7 Juliano Dr., Oxford, (203) 262-0121 (121atoxc.com). Closed Mon. L D, $$, E, WA

Aldario's Restaurant • ***Classic Italian*** Featuring rich colors, cozy booths and vaulted ceilings, this spot serves pork osso buco and zuppa di pesce. • 240 Naugatuck Ave., Milford, (203) 874-6096 (aldarios.com). Closed Mon. L D, $$, WA

Archie Moore's Bar & Restaurant • ***American*** Casual pub-style dining with burgers, nachos and salads. And don't miss the award-winning buffalo chicken wings. • 188½ Willow St., New Haven, (203) 773-9870; 39 N. Main St., Wallingford, (203) 265-7100; 15 Factory La., Milford, (203) 876-5088, (archiemoores.com). Open daily. L D LS, $

Bar Bouchée • ***French*** Jean Pierre Vuillermet's classic bistro has a black-and-white tile floor, pressed-tin-style walls and ceiling and a zinc bar. On the menu: duck leg confit, charcuterie and beef bourguignon. • 8 Scotland Rd., Madison, (203) 318-8004. Open daily. D, $$

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • ***Spanish Mediterranean*** A hip restaurant serving Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine—including tapas, hot and cold. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 155 Temple St., New Haven, (203) 848-3000 (barcelonawinebar.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Bin 100 • ***Mediterranean*** Feast on delicious Mediterranean cuisine elegantly served in a spacious dining room. • 100 Lansdale Ave., Milford, (203) 882-1400 (bin100restaurant.com). Open daily. D SB, $$, E, WA

Bistro Mediterranean • ***Mediterranean*** This casual and relaxed restaurant has Spanish and Mediterranean influences and offers a variety of beloved dishes including scallops parrilla, paella and brussels sprout salad. • 383 Main St., East Haven, (203) 467-2500, (bistromediterraneanandtapasbar.com. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Carmen Anthony Steakhouse • ***Steak & Seafood*** The place to enjoy thick Black Angus steaks and Maine lobsters in a clubby atmosphere. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 496 Chase Ave., Waterbury, (203) 757-3040; 660 State St., New Haven, (203) 773-1444 (carmenanthony.com). L D LS, $$$, WA

The Cask Republic • ***Gastropub*** Beer is the star here, with 125 bottled and more than 50 draft beers on offer. Pair it with dishes like sweet-potato clam chowder, oyster sliders and pan-seared sea scallops. • 179 Crown St., New Haven, (475) 238-8335 (thecaskrepublic.com). Closed Sun. L D, $$, WA

Ceviche • ***Latin Fusion*** Several different styles of ceviche are offered here. In addition the place features a variety of sizzling Latin dishes, cocktails and 30 different types of tapas. Try the Granada Mojito, which features pomegranate flavors. • 530 Middlebury Road, Middlebury, (203) 527-7634 (cevichelatinkitchen.com). Closed Monday. L (Wed.-Thurs.)D LS, $$, WA

Claire's Corner Copia • ***Vegetarian*** A café-style spot offering globe-trotting dishes like organic-mushroom crêpes, Bengal curry, Irish breakfast and Lithuanian coffee cake. • 1000 Chapel St., New Haven, (203) 562-3888 (clairescornercopia.com). Open daily. B L D SB, $, WA

Consiglio's Restaurant • ***Classic Italian*** Family-owned and -run for over 70 years, Consiglio's is known for classic home-style favorites like homemade cavatelli and braciole, eggplant rollatini and lasagna. • 165 Wooster St., New Haven, (203) 865-4489 (consiglios.com). Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri., Sun.) D, $$

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 157 Wooster St., New Haven, (203) 865-5762 (pepespizzeria.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

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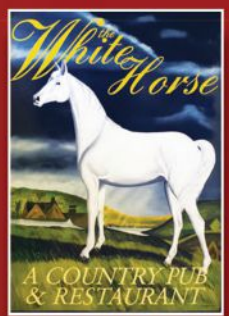

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Geronimo Tequila Bar & Southwest Grill • ***Southwestern Fusion*** A mix of traditional Native American, Mexican, Spanish and Anglo-American fare, with bold flavors and authentic ingredients. • 271 Crown St., New Haven, (203) 777-7700 (geronimobarandgrill.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$ [★★ 7/13]

Goodfellas Restaurant • ***Italian*** The extensive menu is a veritable Best Hits of Italy, featuring pastas and gnocchi, pork chop Milanese, steak pizzaiola, veal saltimbocca and the chef's signature filet cognac. • 702 State St., New Haven, (203) 785-8722 (goodfellasrestaurant.com). Open daily. L, D, $$, WA

Heirloom • ***Modern Continental*** Chef Carey Savona serves herbed gnocchi with rapini and tomatoes, and crab cakes with fennel and vermouth butter. • The Study at Yale, 1157 Chapel St., New Haven, (203) 503-3919 (studyhotels.com). Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, $$, WA

J. Christian's • ***New American*** A smart, lively restaurant and lounge that takes no shortcuts in preparing New American cuisine with a Southern accent. • 9 North Main St., Wallingford, (203) 265-6393 (jchristians.com). Closed Mon. L D, $$

Ibiza Tapas • ***Tapas*** Requeson cheese croquettes, sautéed shrimp in garlic sauce and Spanish veal-and-pork meatballs are among the offerings. • 1832 Dixwell Ave., Hamden, (203) 909-6512 (ibizatapaswinebar.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA

La Tavola Ristorante • ***Classic Italian*** Enjoy a twist on classic Italian cuisine with prosciutto-wrapped figs, pumpkin ravioli and pepper-encrusted Ahi tuna. • 702 Highland Ave., Waterbury, (203) 755-2211 (latavolaristorante.com). Closed Sun. L D, $$, WA

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • ***Seafood*** This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 501 Long Wharf Dr., New Haven, (203) 691-6619 (ljfishtale.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

L'Orcio • ***Contemporary Italian*** This upscale restaurant features a menu of house-made pastas, grilled whole fish and steaks. • 806 State St., New Haven, (203) 777-6670 (lorcio.com). Closed Mon. L (Fri.) D, $$

Miya's • ***Sushi*** A sushi restaurant like no other, thanks to chef Bun Lai's unique creations. • 68 Howe St., New Haven, (203) 777-9760 (miyassushi.com). Closed Sun.-Mon. L D, $$$, WA

Park Central Tavern • ***American*** The dynamic weekly menu showcases signature entrées and classic favorites made with fresh New England ingredients. • 1640 Whitney Ave., Hamden, (203) 287-8887 (parkcentraltavern.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA

Ristorante Luce • ***Classic Italian*** Enjoy the double-cut veal chops, pane cotto, risotto pescatore and daily fish specials. Extensive wine list. • 2987 Whitney Ave., Hamden, (203) 407-8000 (ristoranteluce.net). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$

Roìa • ***French/Italian*** This new spot in the Taft Hotel building evokes a golden era when romance reigned. On the menu: artichoke soup, chicken al mattone and panna cotta. 261 College St., New Haven, (203) 200-7045 (roiarestaurant.com). D (Wed.-Sun.) $$ WA

Sake Fusion Restaurant • ***Asian Fusion*** Indian pancakes with curry sauce, Thai red snapper, Vietnamese-style grilled pork and Malaysian-style sautéed eggplant are just a few of the Asian-fusion dishes on the menu at this exotic spot. • 730 Main St. S., Southbury, (203) 264-2888 (sakefusionsouthbury.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $, WA

Sans Souci • ***American*** A casual mainstay in the area that prides itself on offering fresh pasta, steak, chicken, veal, seafood and other crowd pleasers. • 2003 N. Broad St., Meriden, (203) 639-1777 (sanssoucirestaurant.com). Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D $$

Señor Pancho's • ***Mexican*** A festive spot serving up terrific fresh salsa and margaritas to go with mole poblano, steak ranchero and fajitas. • 280 Cheshire Rd., Prospect, (203) 758-7788; 385 Main St. S., Southbury, (203) 262-6988 (senorpanchos.com). Open daily. L D SB, $, E, WA

Thali Regional Cuisine of India • ***Indian*** Chic, exotic and fun. Thali dinners include Konkan crab, lamb chops and Andhra chicken curry. • 4 Orange St., New Haven, (203) 777-1177 (thali.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

The Wharf • ***New American*** This great spot at the Madison Beach Hotel serves up steak tartare, cioppino and grilled Berkshire pork chop with roasted fennel—with a side of water views. • 94 West Wharf Rd., Madison, (203) 350-0014 (madisonbeachhotel.com). Open daily. B, L (Mon.-Sat.), D. $$$, WA

Wood-n-Tap • ***American*** Hip, fun eateries known for great burgers and great beer. You'll also love the pizza, pasta, salads and sandwiches. • 311 Boston Post Rd., Orange, (203) 799-9663; 970 N. Colony Rd., Wallingford, (203) 265-9663 (woodntap.com). Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

Zafra Cuban Restaurant & Rum Bar • ***Cuban*** With a collection of over 300 different kinds of rum—one of the largest in the country—this New Haven establishment is Connecticut's first true rum bar. Small, dark and atmospheric, in addition to rum this hip locale features chef Tadahiro ("Haya") Hayasaka's subtle and sometimes fanciful take on Cuban soul food. • 259 Orange St., New Haven, (203) 859-5342 (zafrarumbar.com). Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri.) D LS, $$, WA

New London County

Al Dente • ***Italian*** Savor the mouthwatering flavors of frutti di mare, farfalle con pollo and medaglioni de manzo, followed up with cannoli or tiramisu at this Italian dining gem. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, (800) Foxwoods (foxwoods.com). Open daily. D, $$$, E, WA

Alta Strada • ***Italian*** Try favorites like chittara with spicy lobster and fresh peas and grilled lamb chops with asparagus, potato and pickled onion salad. • MGM Grand at Foxwoods, 240 MGM Grand Dr., Mashantucket, (860) 312-2582 (altastradarestaurant.com). Open daily. L D, $$$

Azu • ***American*** Features a great bar and dishes such as grilled pizza salad, baked macaroni and cheese with lobster and linguine with red clam sauce. • 32 West Main St. Mystic, (860) 536-6336 (azuct.com). Open daily. B L D LS, $$

Ballo Italian Restaurant & Social Club • ***Italian*** A sumptuous restaurant inspired by the magnificent 12th-century Abbey of San Galgano in Siena. On the menu: pizza and pasta, striped bass and veal porterhouse. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, (860) 862-1100 (balloitalian.com). L D, $$, WA

Bar Americain • ***American*** This brasserie serves up Bobby Flay specialties like lobster-avocado cocktails, buttermilk-fried chicken with biscuits—and big-time glamour. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, (860) 862-8000 (baramericain.com). Open daily. D, $$

Bleu Squid • ***American*** A bakery and cheese shop serving 30 cheeses and 40 different cupcakes. Also serves up grilled cheese sandwiches to go, freshly made and to order, including the best-selling lobster grilled cheese. • 27 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, (860) 536-6343 (dessertsmysticct.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA

Bobby's Burger Palace • ***American*** This burger palace serves an array of burgers inspired by chef Bobby Flay's extensive travels. Each is a tribute to a different American regional flavor and tradition. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, (888) 226-7711 (www.bobbysburgerpalace.com). Open daily. L D, $$ WA

The Chestnut Grille • ***American*** The winning seasonal menu here includes treats such as pan-roasted duck breast and seared diver scallops. • The Bee and Thistle Inn, 100 Lyme St., Old Lyme, (860) 434-1667 (beeandthistleinn.com). Closed Sun.-Mon. D, $$$, E

The Captain Daniel Packer Inne • ***American*** This 1754 whaler's inn features a view of the Mystic River along with dishes like lemon pepper chicken, filet mignon and salmon • 32 Water St., Mystic, (860) 536-3555 (danielpacker.com). Open daily. L D, $$$ WA

C.C. O'Brien's • ***Irish Pub*** A neighborhood sports pub with great food, friendly service, sports on 20 HDTVs and live entertainment on Saturday nights. • 8 Mechanic St., Pawcatuck, (860) 599-2034 (ccobriens.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Caffé NV • ***Greek*** Greek cuisine is the specialty at this restaurant with stained-glass windows and brick walls. Some favorites include pasta a la Philip and shrimp Saganaki. • 57 Boston Post Rd., Waterford, (860) 444-8111 (cafenv.com). Closed Sun. L D LS, $$, WA

Cedar's Steakhouse • ***American*** Offers lounge seating and cozy booths. Diners can count on the finest cuts of certified dry-aged prime beef and fresh seafood. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, (800) FOXWOODS (foxwoods.com). Open daily. L D, $$$, WA

Chaplin's • ***Seafood*** Specializes in locally caught seafood and regional American bistro favorites. Standouts include halibut sautéed with almonds, tuna with fresh mango and roasted red-pepper sauce and swordfish garnished with salsa. • 165 Bank St., New London, (860) 443-0684. Open daily. D, $$, WA

The Chestnut Grille • ***American*** The winning seasonal menu here includes succulent treats such as pan-roasted duck breast and seared diver scallops. • The Bee and Thistle Inn, 100 Lyme St., Old Lyme, (860) 434-1667 (beeandthistleinn.com). Closed Sun.-Mon. D, $$$, E

David Burke Prime • ***American*** An updated steakhouse menu with dry-aged beef, as well as terrific pork, chicken and seafood specialties. The steak served here is truly a cut above. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, (860) 312-8753 (davidburke-prime.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$$

Dog Watch Café • ***American*** Overlooking Dodson Boatyard in Stonington Borough, this spot offers a casual seaside atmosphere, great food and live entertainment on the weekends. Watch Hill oysters, St. Louis baby-back ribs and grilled swordfish are among the offerings. • 194 Water St., Stonington, (860) 415-4510 (dogwatchcafe.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Engine Room • ***American*** Choose from 16 craft beers on tap at one of the newest and hippest restaurants in Mystic. While burgers take the spotlight, they are by no means all that Engine Room's soup-to-nuts menu has to offer. There are bar bites, appetizers, big salads, sandwiches, entrées, sides and desserts. • 14 Holmes St., Mystic, (860) 415-8117 (engineroomct.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA [★★★ 5/14]

Flanders Fish Market & Restaurant • ***Seafood*** Flanders excels at lobster bisque, fish-and-chips and broiled seafood. Known for its bountiful Sunday buffet, fresh seafood market and New England clambakes. • 22 Chesterfield Rd., East Lyme, (860) 739-8866 (flandersfish.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous clam pizza is the standout, many other varieties are also worth the wait. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, (860) 862-8888 (pepespizzeria.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

Gaspar's Restaurant • ***New American Cuisine*** Enjoy award-winning lobster bisque, sushi rolls and other sea-to-table delicacies made from fresh seafood purchased blocks away at the New London docks. Ambience is old-school classy, white tablecloths, red roses and candlelight. • 385 Bank Street, New London, (860) 440-3663 (gasparsnewlondon.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Harbour House Restaurant and Bar • ***Seafood*** Enjoy ahi tuna tacos, lobster, grilled swordfish and other seafood favorites in a casually elegant and comfortable setting with stunning water views. • 3 Williams Ave., Mystic, (860) 536-8144 (harbourhousect.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$, E, WA

Inishmor Pub • ***Irish American*** Get a taste of the old country at this authentic Irish pub where specialties include Gaelic favorites like chips and curry and shepherd's pie. • 20 Main St., Colchester, (inishmorpub.com). Open daily. L D LS $$, E

Jasper White's Summer Shack • ***Seafood*** This award-winning restaurant features live lobster and crab, fried seafood, chowders and wood-grilled fish. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, (860) 862-9500 (summershackrestaurant.com). Open daily. L D SB, $$

Kensington's at The Spa at Norwich Inn • ***American*** A first-class restaurant serving gourmet food with an emphasis on natural meats, fresh, locally sourced produce and healthy preparations. • 607 West Thames St., Norwich, (860) 425-3630 (thespaatnorwichinn.com). Open daily. B L D SB, $$$, E, WA

Kitchen Little • ***American*** Enjoy a panoramic view of the Mystic River while dining on eggs Benedict, omelets and other savory egg dishes at this breakfast destination. • 36 Quarry Rd., Mystic (kitchenlittle.org). Open daily for breakfast. B L (Mon.-Fri.) SB, $

Michael Jordan's Steak House • ***American*** USDA prime steaks, chops and fresh seafood paired with an extensive wine list. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, (860) 862-8600 (michaeljordansteakhouse.com). Open daily. D, $$$

The Old Lyme Inn • ***American*** The Inn's restaurant and bar features a locally sourced menu with a modern twist on traditional dishes. • 85 Lyme St., Old Lyme, (860) 434-2600 (oldlymeinn.com). Open daily. L D, $$$, WA

Octagon • ***American*** The menu at this upscale yet relaxed steak house includes the signature 24-ounce bone-in rib eye, 14-ounce Kobe sirloin and wild striped bass. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • Mystic Marriott Hotel, 625 North Rd., Groton, (860) 326-0360 (octagonsteakhouse.com). Open daily. D, $$$, R

Oyster Club • ***American*** This popular place showcases food that travels the shortest distance from farm and sea to table, with seasonality and location determining the day's dishes. • 13 Water St., Mystic, (860) 415-9266 (oysterclubct.com). Closed Tues. L (Sat.) D SB, $$, WA

Paragon • ***American*** This 24th floor aerie is Foxwoods' showpiece, with a menu that highlights organic produce and meats: crispy wild boar meatballs and Dover sole with beurre noir. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, (800) 312-3000 (foxwoods.com). Closed Mon.-Tues. D, $$$, WA

Recovery Room Restaurant • ***American*** This is the place for designer pizzas, chopped salads and pasta dishes. Full bar. • 445 Ocean Ave., New London, (860) 443-2619 (therecoveryroomnl.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Rustic Cafe • ***American*** Customer favorites at this casual café include $9 lobster rolls, spinach salad, chocolate gorgonzola burgers, cinnamon and chipotle baby back ribs, and homemade pies. • 516 Boston Post Rd., East Lyme, (860) 691-0477 (therusticcafe.com). Open daily. L D, $, E

S&P Oyster Co. • ***Seafood*** Serving traditional New England seafood with a South American flair. Enjoy oysters on the half shell, PEI mussels, fresh cuts of fish and Creekstone Farms steaks grilled over hard woods. • 1 Holmes St., Mystic, (860) 536-2674 (sp-oyster.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Shrine • ***Asian Fusion*** A restaurant that serves an array of alluring dishes with Vietnamese, Thai and Japanese influences—and one of the state's hottest night spots. • MGM Grand at Foxwoods, (860) 312-8888 (shrinemgmfoxwoods.com). Open daily. (Scorpion Bar). L D, $$

Tolland County

Altnaveigh Inn & Restaurant • ***American*** This 1734 farmhouse serves filet mignon with port-wine reduction demiglace and pan-seared tuna with onion marmalade. • 957 Storrs Rd., Storrs, (860) 429-4490 (altnaveighinn.com). Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, $$$, WA

Angellino's Restaurant • ***Italian*** There's plenty to like at Angellino's, including penne Augustino with artichoke hearts, sun-dried tomatoes and garlic. • 135 Storrs Rd., Mansfield, (860) 450-7071; 346 Kelly Rd., Vernon, (860) 644-7702 (angellinos.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Asian Bistro • ***Asian Fusion*** A popular hibachi steak house/bar offering Asian-fusion dishes along with sushi and sashimi. • 95 Storrs Rd., Mansfield, (860) 456-8316 (asianbistromansfield.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

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dining guide | tolland county

Bidwell Tavern • ***American*** This 1822 Coventry tavern, once the town hall, offers prime rib, chicken wings and 24 beers on tap. • 1260 Main St. (Rte. 31), Coventry, (860) 742-6978. Open daily. L D LS, $$, E, WA

Coyote Flaco • ***Mexican*** Standouts at this colorful spot include chile rellenos, pollo al mole, bistek ranchero and the enchilada trio. • 50 Higgins Hwy., Mansfield, (860) 423-4414 (coyoteflacomansfield.com). Open daily. L (Fri.-Sun.) D, $$, WA

Casey's Café • ***American*** Wednesday is pasta night, Thursday is build-your-own Mexican specialties and Sunday is barbecue all day long at this family-run family-style restaurant. • 127 West Rd., Ellington, (860) 870-8784 (caseyscafect.com). Open daily. L D, $

Elmo's Dockside • ***Seafood*** Known for fresh, local seafood, homemade clam chowder and lobster bisque, USDA High Choice beef, poultry and pasta dishes. • 48 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, (860) 646-3474, (elmosdockside.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$

Georgina's Italian Restaurant • ***Italian*** Warm and inviting—try the calamari appetizer, chicken Athena, lasagna and chicken parmigiano. 275 Boston Tpke., Bolton, (860) 647-0345 (georginasrestaurant.com). Closed Mon. L D, $$, WA

Little Mark's Big BBQ • ***Barbecue*** Little Mark's famous homemade sauces, such as Kansas City Sweet, Pork Pickin' Vinegar and Texas Hot, enhance the beef and pork ribs. • 226 Talcottville Rd., Vernon, (860) 872-1410 (littlemarksbbq.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Pancho Loco • ***Mexican*** Don your shorts and Hawaiian shirt and try this Parrothead paradise for sizzling fajitas and chillin' margaritas. • 218 Talcottville Rd., Vernon, (860) 871-1819 (pancholoco.net). Open daily. L D, $, E, WA

Rein's New York Style Deli-Restaurant • ***American*** A bright and bustling Jewish deli serving everything from challah French toast and potato pancakes to pastrami Reubens and cheese blintzes. • 435 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, (860) 875-1344 (reinsdeli.com). Open daily. B L D LS SB, $, WA

Somers Inn Restaurant • ***American*** American cuisine served in a historic country setting. Specialties include prime rib, baked stuffed shrimp with spinach-artichoke sauce and bacon-wrapped buffalo shrimp. • 585 Main St., Somers, (860) 749-2256 (thesomersinn.com). Closed Mon.-Tues. L (Wed.-Fri.) D SB, $$, WA

Tavern House Grill • ***American*** This pub-style sports bar features live entertainment and regular karaoke events. On the menu: steaks, burgers, grilled sandwiches and wings. • 200 Merrow Rd. Tolland, (860) 872-0332 (tavernhousegrill.com). Open daily. L D SB, $, E, WA

True Blue Tavern at the Nathan Hale Inn • ***American*** Great casual dining in a fun atmosphere celebrating the spirit of UConn athletics. • 855 Bolton Rd., Storrs, (860) 427-7888 (nathanhaleinn.com). Open daily. D, $, WA

Trattoria da Lepri • ***Italian*** This family-owned and -run eatery prepares dishes from scratch with local ingredients. On the menu: rigatoni Bolognese, veal scallopini Marsala and crabmeat-stuffed shrimp. • 89 West Rd., Ellington, (860) 875-1111 (trattoriadalepri.com). Closed Sun.-Mon. D, $$, WA

Utsav Indian Cuisine • ***Indian*** This gem boasts a menu of delectable Indian treats such as shamm savera or calamari cochin. • 575 Talcottville Rd., Vernon, (860) 871-8714 (utsavcuisine.com). Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Willington Pizza House • ***Pizza*** Unusual designer pizza concoctions, including red-potato and seafood casino. • 25 River Rd. (Rte. 32), Willington, (860) 429-7433 (willingtonpizza.com). Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

Wood-n-Tap • ***American*** Known for great burgers and great beer. You'll also love the pizza, pasta, salads and sandwiches. • 236 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, (860) 872-6700 (woodntap.com). L D LS, $, WA

Windham County

85 Main • ***New American*** There's something for everybody at this Main Street fixture: from sushi to duck-liver pâté, pulled-pork barbecue to wild-mushroom ravioli. • 85 Main St., Putnam, (860) 928-1660 (85main.com). Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Bella's Bistro • ***Northern Italian*** An upscale spot with a seasonal menu serving veal, beef, chicken, pork, pizzas, seasonal fish, shrimp, mussels, scallops and lobster. • 75 Main St., Putnam, (860) 928-7343 (bellasbistromarket.com). Closed Mon. L D (Tues.-Sat.), $$, WA

The Courthouse Bar & Grill • ***American*** Serves 20 great appetizers plus "arresting" main courses such as seafood Alfredo and Montreal sirloin. • 121 Main St., Putnam, (860) 963-0074 (courthousebarandgrille.com). Open daily. L D LS (weekends), $, WA

Golden Lamb Buttery • ***American*** In a barn overlooking a 1,000-acre farm, dinner here might be roast duckling, chateubriand or honey-glazed rack of lamb. For dessert, there's strawberry-rhubarb bread pudding or lemon blueberry cake. • 199 Bush Hill Rd., Brooklyn, (860) 774-4423 (thegoldenlamb.com). Closed Sun.-Mon. L D (Fri.-Sat.), $$$, E, WA

Hank's Restaurant • ***American*** A family place serving home-style chowders, lobster salad rolls and prime rib. • 416 Providence Rd., Brooklyn, (860) 774-6071 (hanksrestaurant.com). Open daily. L D, $$

The Inn at Woodstock Hill • ***American*** The menu at this historic estate includes shrimp-and-sea-scallop stir-fry, fontina-stuffed veal tenderloin Serrano and duckling à l'orange. • 94 Plaine Hill Rd., Woodstock, (860) 928-0528 (woodstockhill.com). Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, $$$, WA

J.D. Cooper's • ***American*** A sports pub with walls of sports memorabilia and 125 entrées from prime rib to fajitas to fresh fish. • 146 Park Rd., Putnam, (860) 928-0501. Open daily. L D, $, E (Sat.), WA

The Mansion at Bald Hill • ***American*** The pan-seared diver scallops with jumbo shrimp is tops, and don't skip the lobster mac 'n' cheese. • 29 Plaine Rd., South Woodstock, (860) 974-3456 (mansionatbaldhill.com). Closed Mon. D, $$$, WA

Mozzarella's Grill & Bar • ***American/Italian*** A great family restaurant with a warm, cozy atmosphere serving fresh burgers, steaks, seafood, and Italian specialties. • 460 Hartford Tpke., Dayville, (860) 774-3434 (mozzarellasgrill.com). Closed Fri.-Sun. B L D, $, E, WA

New Ocean Palace • ***Japanese*** Enjoy the tiger roll, mango chicken, crab rangoon and teriyaki beef. • 520A Providence Rd., Brooklyn, (860) 779-9699 (newoceanbrooklynct.com). Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $, WA

Thai Basil • ***Thai/Japanese*** Favorite dishes include Drunken Noodles, General Thai chicken, Thai Basil Farm and pad Thai, as well as Japanese hibachi steak and seafood dishes. • 187 North St., Danielson, (860) 774-1986 (thaibasilct.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA

Thai Place • ***Thai*** More than 100 authentic dishes including pad Thai, barbecued chicken and skewered satay with sweet nam jim kai sauce. • 214 Kennedy Dr., Putnam, (860) 963-7770 (www.thaiplaceputnam.com). Open daily. L D, $, WA

Tony's Pizza • ***Pizza*** With more than 30 years in business, Despina Loukas knows how to make pizzas. Customer favorites include crispy pepperoni and taco. • 117 Main St., Willimantic, (860) 423-7717 (tonyspizzaplace.com). Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

The Vanilla Bean Café • ***American*** A restaurant known for its homemade soups, award-winning chili, vegetarian dishes, and desserts. • Rtes. 44, 169 & 97, Pomfret, (860) 928-1562 (thevanillabeancafe.com). Open daily. B L D (Wed.-Sun.), $$, E, WA

Willimantic Brewing Co./Main Street Café • ***Brew Pub*** In a historic U.S. Post Office building, beers are brewed in full view of diners. Try the ale-steamed mussels. • 967 Main St., Willimantic, (860) 423-6777 (willibrew.com). Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D, $$, WA

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President's message

We at CPTV hope that 2015 is off to a good start for you and your loved ones. It is certainly off to a good start for us, as we continue to provide new episodes of some of our viewers' favorite programs, including *Antiques Roadshow*, the beloved *Masterpiece* drama "Downton Abbey" and the CPTV Original series *All Things Connecticut*.

However, we are particularly excited this February to be furthering our commitment to showcasing diversity, which has always been an essential part of our mission. For instance, our program schedule features a number of shows airing in celebration of Black History Month. February has been officially designated as Black History Month in America every year since 1976 (although February was associated with the celebration and remembrance of African American history long before then). We at CPTV are proud to honor this tradition with a number of special presentations exploring African American history and culture. For more information on our Black History Month programming, see this issue's program listings.

We are also pleased to be continuing our Celebrating Jewish Heritage initiative. Launched last June, this initiative is made possible by Presenting Sponsor Hebrew Health Care, a Hartford HealthCare clinical partner. It continues into 2015 with even more special programming on the history, diversity and prominence of Jewish influence and culture in Connecticut and around the world. In February, CPTV will feature *The Jewish People: A Story of Survival*, a documentary detailing the resilience of a people who have persevered and survived over so many millennia, despite incredible adversity. This film airs Monday, February 2 at 10 p.m. and Sunday, February 8 at 2 p.m. For more information on the Celebrating Jewish Heritage initiative, visit CPTV.org/Celebrating-Jewish-Heritage.

Finally, on Tuesdays, February 17 and 24 at 9 p.m., CPTV airs *The Italian Americans*. This new four-hour documentary series traces the Italian experience in America from the late 19th century to present day, exploring everything from the challenges Italian immigrants faced to their amazing cultural contributions in America.

One of the reasons we at CPTV love to live and work in the Nutmeg State is because it is such an incredibly diverse place, with residents of all religions, ethnicities and creeds. We feel honored to be able to reflect this diversity in our programming, and we are grateful to you, our members, for granting us the ability to do so — thank you.

Jerry Franklin
President and CEO, Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network

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What's On! cptv4U

CPTV4U's Evening Program Schedule

For CPTV4U's all-day listings, visit CPTV.org and click the "Schedules" tab.

	SUNDAY	MONDAY**	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
6:00 p.m.	Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.*	PBS NewsHour	PBS NewsHour	PBS NewsHour	PBS NewsHour	PBS NewsHour	NOVA
6:30 p.m.							
7:00 p.m.	Antiques Roadshow	Built to Last	The Great British Baking Show	Getting Away Together	This Old House Hour	EARTH A New Wild	The Jewel in the Crown
7:30 p.m.		Hometime		Rick Steves' Europe			
8:00 p.m.	Live From the Artists Den	Nature	Call the Midwife	Antiques Roadshow	Market Warriors	NOVA	Foyle's War****
8:30 p.m.							
9:00 p.m.	Austin City Limits	Nature***	Masterpiece Classic: Downton Abbey, Season 5	Genealogy Roadshow	Thursday Night Independent Films & Documentaries	Friday Night Science Programming	Foyle's War****
9:30 p.m.							
10:00 p.m.	Sunday Night Music Programming	Globe Trekker***	Manor of Speaking	Genealogy Roadshow (The Italian Americans airs February 18 and 25, 10-11 p.m.)			Inspector Morse****
10:30 p.m.			All Things Connecticut				
11:00 p.m.	Woodsongs	Charlie Rose***	Charlie Rose	Charlie Rose	Charlie Rose	Charlie Rose	Scott & Bailey****
11:30 p.m.							

* *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* airs February 15 and 22, 6-7 p.m.

** A marathon of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* airs February 16, 9 a.m.- 12 a.m. For more information, see *Program Picks*, page 72.

*** Parts 1, 2 and 3 of *Penguins: Spy in the Huddle, A* Nature *Special Presentation* air back-to-back February 2, 9 p.m.-12 a.m.

**** On February 28, *Foyle's War Revisited* airs 8-9:30 p.m. (for more information, see *Program Picks*, page 72); *Masterpiece Mystery!:* "Grantchester" airs 9:30-10:30 p.m.; *Scott & Bailey* airs 10:30-11:30 p.m.; and an encore presentation of *Foyle's War Revisited* airs 11:30 p.m.-1 a.m.

WNPR Business Reporting
Business reporter Harriet Jones covers the economy, Connecticut commerce and the regional industry landscape.

Listen for the WNPR Business Report
Weekdays at 8:06 a.m.

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PROGRAM PICKS FROM CPTV'S LINEUP OF SERVICES

cptv sports

February Highlights

Visit CPTVSports.org for dates and times for exciting sports events throughout the month, including:

*** Girls High School Basketball Conference Finals**

*** Boys High School Basketball**

*** Boys High School Ice Hockey**

*** CIAC Indoor Track Championships**

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(Check local listings for channel information.)

Black History Month Programming Airing Throughout February

CPTV features programs celebrating Black History Month, including the new *Antiques Roadshow* episode "Celebrating Black Americana," the *Independent Lens* film "Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People" and *American Masters'* "August Wilson: The Ground on Which I Stand." Black History Month programs also air on CPTV4U; visit CPTV.org for the complete lineup.

Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever (My Music) Saturday, February 28 at 8 p.m.

Hosted by legendary comedian Richard Pryor and unseen for more than 20 years, this classic music special, presented by *My Music*, celebrates the 25th anniversary of Motown with reunions of Smokey Robinson & the Miracles, Diana Ross & the Supremes, the Jackson 5, the Temptations, the Four Tops and many more.

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The Roosevelts: An Intimate History Marathon Monday, February 16 Beginning at 9 a.m.

CPTV celebrates Presidents Day with a marathon of all seven episodes of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*. This fascinating documentary series from Ken Burns chronicles the lives of Theodore, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, three members of one of the most prominent and influential families in the history of American politics.

Foyle's War Revisited Saturday, February 28 at 8 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.

This new special goes behind the scenes of the acclaimed detective series *Foyle's War*. Hosted by John Mahoney (*Frasier*), who guest stars in the new season coming to CPTV this spring, this program revisits favorite moments from previous seasons of *Foyle's War* and offers an exclusive sneak peek of Season 8!

cptvKids

Monday Through Friday

6:30 AM	Arthur	12:30 PM	Thomas & Friends
7:00	Odd Squad	1:00	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood
7:30	Wild Kratts	1:30	Caillou
8:00	Curious George	2:00	Super Why!
8:30	The Cat in the Hat	2:30	Dinosaur Train
9:00	Peg + Cat	3:00	Peg + Cat
9:30	Dinosaur Train	3:30	The Cat in the Hat
10:00	Sesame Street	4:00	Curious George
11:00	Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood	4:30	Odd Squad
11:30	Super Why!	5:00	Wild Kratts
Noon	Sid the Science Kid	5:30	Wild Kratts

Who's Big, Blue and Featured in an All-New Movie Event Premiering February 16? Cookie Monster, Star of *The Cookie Thief*!

When Cookie Monster is wrongly accused of stealing world-famous masterpieces, it's up to Detective Elmo, Chris and the rest of the gang to clear his name in *The Cookie Thief,* the brand-new hour-long movie event from *Sesame Street*.

This hilarious parody is set at the Museum of Modern Cookies, and even as the adventure heats up, tour guide Prairie Dawn is able to share stories, like how the great artist Leonardo da Crunchy made Muncha Lisa smile.

Cookie Monster also learns some important self-regulation strategies — about cookies, of course — along the way.

The Cookie Thief premieres on Monday, February 16 at 10 a.m., with an encore presentation airing Saturday, February 21 at 6:30 a.m. on CPTV Kids. Best of all, *The Cookie Thief*'s February 16 premiere kicks off a whole week of new episodes of *Sesame Street,* now in its 45th season!

Dr. M. Sanjayan, an expert in conservation and wildlife ecology and host of *EARTH A New Wild*

Nature Is Showcased on Television Like Never Before in *EARTH A New Wild*

The New Series Comes to CPTV Wednesdays Beginning February 4

The ambitious new five-part series *EARTH A New Wild* takes a fresh look at humankind's relationship to the planet's wildest places and most fascinating species. On Wednesday, February 4 at 9 p.m., CPTV airs the special two-hour premiere, after which the series airs Wednesdays at 10 p.m.

EARTH A New Wild is hosted by Dr. M. Sanjayan and shows nature as it has almost never before been seen on television. Produced by National Geographic Television in association with Passion Planet, the series follows Sanjayan, an expert in conservation and wildlife ecology who has worked with the Nature Conservancy on significant conservation efforts across the globe, as he takes viewers on a journey to explore how humans are woven into every aspect of the planet's natural systems.

The series features spectacular natural history footage from the most striking places on earth, filming encounters between wild animals and the people who live and work with them. With up-close looks at a range of species, including giant pandas, humpback whales, African lions and Arctic reindeer, Sanjayan reveals that cohabitations with animals can work — and be mutually beneficial.

"Earth has entered a new epoch, and we are now living on a planet where our impacts are felt everywhere," said Sanjayan. "This series is a first for nature films; it turns the camera around and acknowledges that spectacular nature doesn't exist in isolation, that humans are part of the picture. In this way, we show viewers not only stunning, never-before-seen natural history, but also discover extraordinary stories that challenge the very notion that humans are separate from nature, and how, in the new wild, humans and wildlife can – and must – thrive together."

The five parts of *EARTH A New Wild* include:

"Home/Plains," Airing Wednesday, February 4 at 9 p.m.
"Home" examines the relationship between humans and large animals on a 21st-century planet and asks if wild nature can still survive in what scientists now acknowledge is a new age for the planet — the Age of Man.

Then, from the African plains to the American Midwest, "Plains" explores wild grasslands, home to the greatest gathering places of animal life on the planet, yet among the most endangered places on earth. Follow Sanjayan as he explores these plains and joins an action-packed elephant rescue along the way.

"Forests," Airing Wednesday, February 11 at 10 p.m.
Sanjayan travels deep into the western-most Amazon to a place scientists believe may be the most biodiverse on earth, still holding the secrets of uncontacted tribes. From there, Sanjayan reveals a new understanding about humans' relationship with the forests of the world.

"Oceans," Airing Wednesday, February 18 at 10 p.m.
This episode introduces Jeremy Jackson, whose seminal paper "The Rise of Slime" dramatically changed the way scientists look at humans' relationship with the oceans. Plus, witness a mass gathering of fearsome ocean predators at the most pristine coral atoll on earth, visit futuristic offshore fish farms in Mexico and more.

"Water," Airing Wednesday, February 25 at 10 p.m.
Sanjayan explores humankind's relationship with the earth's most important resource, unraveling dramatic connections between the pulse of fresh water and the health of the planet. In North America, an epic kayak journey charting the flow of the once-mighty Colorado River ends in an unlikely ray of hope.

cptv Primetime

CPTV Early Prime Monday Through Friday, unless otherwise noted:

6:00 pm BBC World News
6:30 Nightly Business Report
7:00 PBS NewsHour

CPTV Original, CPTV National Production or Presentation or CPTV Co-production indicated in blue.

CPTV's Black History Month programming indicated in green.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

6:30 am Angelina Ballerina: The Next Steps
7:00 Curious George
7:30 The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!
8:00 Signing Time
8:30 Design Squad
9:00 Charlie Rose: The Week
9:30 Religion & Ethics Newsweekly
10:00 Washington Week
10:30 Start Up
11:00 Consuelo Mack WealthTrack
11:30 To the Contrary
12:00 The McLaughlin Group
12:30 All Things Connecticut
Part 4 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut,* page 79.)
1:00 Living Modern in Connecticut
Host and producer Diane Smith tells the story of notable buildings in Connecticut and opens viewers' eyes to a new era in historic preservation.
1:30 Edward VIII — The Nazi King
An FBI report from 1941 details how the Duke and Duchess of Windsor harbored pro-Nazi sympathies.
2:30 Royals at War 1939-1945
Learn how members of the royal family helped to boost their subjects' morale during World War II.
3:30 American Woodshop
4:00 Woodsmith Shop
4:30 Hometime
5:00 Ask This Old House
5:30 This Old House
6:00 Death in Paradise
A guest at DI Richard Poole's university reunion is murdered.
7:00 Father Brown
The Shadow of the Scaffold Father Brown tries to prove the innocence of a convicted killer granted a temporary reprieve from the gallows.
8:00 Call the Midwife
Sister Julienne puts her reputation on the line to help a pregnant prison inmate. Part 3 of 8.
9:00 Masterpiece Classic
Downton Abbey, Season 5 As the new season continues, Rose makes a new acquaintance, and Edith's link to Marigold draws attention. Part 5 of 9.
10:00 Masterpiece Mystery!
Grantchester Sidney investigates when a woman dies shortly after telling him that someone wants her dead. Part 3 of 6.
11:00 Midsomer Murders
Death of a Hollow Man A dramatic production of *Amadeus* reveals a backstage world of murder. Part 1 of 2.
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2

8:00 Antiques Roadshow
Austin, Texas, Part 2 New Season 19 episodes of *Antiques Roadshow* air Mondays at 8 p.m., followed by encore presentations of popular episodes Mondays at 9 p.m. Don't miss a whole new season of unique items and unpredictable appraisals from across the nation!
9:00 Antiques Roadshow
San Diego, California, Part 1
10:00 The Jewish People: A Story of Survival
This film explores how the Jews have survived through so many millennia while other civilizations have declined and perished.
11:00 A Path Appears
Journalist Nicholas Kristof and actresses Ashley Judd and Blake Lively meet activists fighting sex trafficking in America. Part 2 of 3.
(12:30 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

8:00 Genealogy Roadshow
New Orleans — Board of Trade
Catch new Season 2 episodes of this series that takes a historical look into U.S. communities by exploring the genetic heritage of volunteers from each of those communities.
9:00 The Big Burn: American Experience
In the summer of 1910, hundreds of wildfires raged across the Northern Rockies. By the time it was over, millions of acres had burned and at least 78 firefighters were dead. It was the largest fire in American history.
10:00 Made in Connecticut
This documentary explores modern manufacturing and the role of innovation in companies that are located and thriving in Connecticut.
11:00 Frontline
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

8:00 Nature
Legendary White Stallions This story of the famous Lipizzaner stallions focuses on the bond between the horses and their caregivers.
9:00 EARTH A New Wild
Home/Plains (See *Feature,* page 73.)

NOVA — "Building Wonders"
Wednesdays at 9 p.m. Beginning February 11

NOVA premieres "Building Wonders," a trilogy of new episodes exploring some of the most incredible man-made structures on earth, including the Colosseum, a monument to Roman imperial power; the city of Petra, built in what is now Jordan; and Istanbul's magnificent Hagia Sophia. Archaeologists, engineers and other experts uncover the secrets of these architectural marvels as never before.

11:00 Independent Lens
Facing the Storm: The Story of the American Bison Learn how cattle ranching, urban sprawl and sport hunting have squeezed the bison from the Great Plains.
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

8:00 All Things Connecticut
Part 5 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut,* page 79.)
8:30 Father Brown
The Mysteries of the Rosary Father Brown and Sid go on a quest to find the mythical Lannington Rosary.
9:30 Death in Paradise
DI Humphrey Goodman and his team are perplexed by a seemingly random killing on a film set.
10:30 Midsomer Murders
Death of a Hollow Man Part 1 of 2. (See February 1 at 11 p.m.)
11:30 This Old House
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6

8:00 Midsomer Murders
Death of a Hollow Man Part 2 of 2. (See February 1 at 11 p.m.)
9:00 Masterpiece Mystery!
Wallander, Series 3: The Dogs of Riga Wallander investigates the disappearance of a police major who was involved in a torture case.
10:30 Scott & Bailey
A murder bears striking similarities to a case from 13 years ago.
11:30 Bluegrass Underground
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

6:30 am Sesame Street
7:00 Wild Kratts
7:30 Thomas & Friends

8:00 **Word World**
8:30 **Biz Kid$**
9:00 **Everyday Edisons**
9:30 **Getting Away Together**
10:00 **Rick Steves' Europe**
10:30 **All Things Connecticut**
Part 5 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
11:00 **Living Modern in Connecticut**
(See February 1 at 1 p.m.)
11:30 **This Old House Hour**
12:30 **Growing a Greener World**
1:00 **The Great British Baking Show**
Continental Cakes The popular British competition series continues as passionate amateur bakers tackle a different skill each week, each hoping to be named the U.K.'s best.
2:00 **America's Test Kitchen**
2:30 **Cook's Country Kitchen**
3:00 **Martha Stewart's Cooking School**
3:30 **Martha Bakes**
4:00 **Jacques Pepin: More Fast Food My Way**
4:30 **Simply Ming**
5:00 **Lidia's Kitchen**
5:30 **A Moveable Feast**
6:00 **Made in Connecticut**
(See February 3 at 10 p.m.)
7:00 **This Old House**
7:30 **Viewers' Favorites**
Sit back, relax and enjoy the evening as CPTV airs some of its most popular specials.
9:00 **Unlocking Sherlock**
Get a behind-the-scenes look into the world of Sherlock Holmes, including insights into the making of the popular *Masterpiece Mystery!* series "Sherlock."
10:00 **Secrets of Scotland Yard**
An exploration of London's police force sheds light on what it takes to become a modern-day Sherlock Holmes.
11:00 **Secrets of the Tower of London**
Go behind the walls of the formidable fortress that has stood in the city of London for nearly 1,000 years.
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

6:30 am **Angelina Ballerina: The Next Steps**
7:00 **Curious George**
7:30 **The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!**
8:00 **Signing Time**
8:30 **Design Squad**
9:00 **Charlie Rose: The Week**
9:30 **Religion & Ethics Newsweekly**
10:00 **Washington Week**
10:30 **Start Up**
11:00 **Consuelo Mack WealthTrack**
11:30 **To the Contrary**
12:00 **The McLaughlin Group**
12:30 **All Things Connecticut**
Part 5 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
1:00 **The Blizzard of '78**
By midday on February 6, 1978, Connecticut highways were jammed with accidents and abandoned cars when a blizzard hit, bringing 15 to 30 inches of snow, bone-chilling temperatures and wind gusts of up to 70 miles per hour.
2:00 **The Jewish People: A Story of Survival**
(See February 2 at 10 p.m.)
3:00 **Rick Steves' Europe**
The Best of Israel Rick Steves takes viewers on a tour of Israel, visiting such sites as Tel Aviv, the fortress of Masada, the Sea of Galilee and the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial.
3:30 **American Woodshop**
4:00 **Woodsmith Shop**
4:30 **Hometime**
5:00 **Ask This Old House**
5:30 **This Old House**
6:00 **Death in Paradise**
(See February 5 at 9:30 p.m.)
7:00 **Father Brown**
The Mysteries of the Rosary (See February 5 at 8:30 p.m.)
8:00 **Call the Midwife**
Jenny's patient struggles to cope with her mother's agoraphobia and her own pregnancy. Part 4 of 8.
9:00 **Masterpiece Classic**
Downton Abbey, Season 5 While police deepen their probe, Bates tells Anna the truth. Part 6 of 9.
10:00 **Masterpiece Mystery!**
Grantchester A shocking murder reveals the depths of homophobia in Cambridge. Part 4 of 6.
11:00 **Midsomer Murders**
Death of a Hollow Man Part 2 of 2. (See February 1 at 11 p.m.)
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

8:00 **Antiques Roadshow**
Austin, Texas, Part 3 (See February 2 at 8 p.m.)
9:00 **Antiques Roadshow**
Celebrating Black Americana
10:00 **Rise of the Black Pharaohs**
In the Sudan, archaeologists are finding evidence of an advanced African society with powerful armies, vast reach and spiritually driven imperial aspirations to rival the Egyptians'.
11:00 **A Path Appears**
Nicholas Kristof joins Mia Farrow and Ronan Farrow to meet with activists fighting for women's rights in Kenya. Part 3 of 3.
(12:30 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

8:00 **The Roosevelts: An Intimate History**
A Common Cause (1939-1944) Catch a special presentation of Part 6 of Ken Burns' series profiling Theodore, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. "A Common Cause" follows FDR as he shatters the third-term tradition, struggles to prepare the U.S. to enter World War II and helps set the course toward Allied victory. Meanwhile, Eleanor works to keep New Deal reforms alive and travels the Pacific, comforting wounded servicemen.
11:00 **Frontline**
Being Mortal Writer and surgeon Atul Gawande examines how doctors care for terminally ill patients in this new film from *Frontline*.
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

8:00 **Nature**
Animal Odd Couples Unlikely cross-species relationships, such as a chimp bottle-feeding a tiger cub, are examined.
9:00 **NOVA**
Building Wonders: Colosseum — Roman Death Trap (See *Highlight*, page 74.)
10:00 **EARTH A New Wild**
Forests (See *Feature*, page 73.)
11:00 **American Masters**
John Muir in the New World A century after his death, John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, is remembered as the father of the environmental movement.
(12:30 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12

8:00 **All Things Connecticut**
Part 6 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
8:30 **Father Brown**
The Daughters of Jerusalem
Father Brown is immobilized with a broken leg, but must still investigate when a woman dies mysteriously.
9:30 **Death in Paradise**
A scandalous murder brings the team into contact with the social elite of Saint-Marie.
10:30 **Midsomer Murders**
Death of a Hollow Man Part 2 of 2. (See February 1 at 11 p.m.)
11:30 **This Old House**
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

8:00 **Midsomer Murders**
Faithful Unto Death An investigation into a crafts center's finances turns sinister when the owner's wife disappears. Part 1 of 2.
9:00 **Masterpiece Mystery!**
Wallander, Series 3: Before the Frost
Wallander investigates arson attacks that appear to involve an old friend of his estranged daughter.
10:30 **Scott & Bailey**
The team searches for a killer when the body of a young boy is discovered.
11:30 **Bluegrass Underground**
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

6:30 am **Sesame Street**
7:00 **Wild Kratts**
7:30 **Thomas & Friends**
8:00 **Word World**
8:30 **Biz Kid$**
9:00 **Everyday Edisons**
9:30 **Getting Away Together**
10:00 **Rick Steves' Europe**
10:30 **All Things Connecticut**
Part 6 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
11:00 **Connecticut's Cultural Treasures**
Curiosity and Passion for the Process
This CPTV series allows viewers to tour some of Connecticut's most interesting culturally significant destinations without ever leaving home!

11:30 **This Old House Hour**
12:30 **Growing a Greener World**
1:00 **The Great British Baking Show**
Pastries (See February 7 at 1 p.m.)
2:00 **America's Test Kitchen**
2:30 **Cook's Country Kitchen**
3:00 **Martha Stewart's Cooking School**
3:30 **Martha Bakes**
4:00 **Jacques Pepin: More Fast Food My Way**
4:30 **Simply Ming**
5:00 **Lidia's Kitchen**
5:30 **A Moveable Feast**
6:00 **Hometime**
6:30 **Ask This Old House**
7:00 **This Old House**
7:30 **This Old House**
8:00 **Queen Victoria's Children**
A Domestic Tyrant The relationships between Queen Victoria, her husband Albert, the Prince Consort, and their nine children are explored in this two-part documentary. Spanning 60 years, this saga tells a tale of manipulation, conflict and emotional blackmail.
9:00 **Queen Victoria's Children**
Princes Will Be Princes (See February 14 at 8 p.m.)
10:00 **Tales From the Royal Bedchamber**
Historian Lucy Worsley reveals that the obsession with royal bedrooms, births and successions reflects the changing fortunes of the monarchy itself.
11:00 **Secrets of Her Majesty's Secret Service**
This rare, close look into the legendary British Secret Service lifts the veil on the shadowy world of spying.
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

6:30 am **Angelina Ballerina: The Next Steps**
7:00 **Curious George**
7:30 **The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!**
8:00 **Signing Time**
8:30 **Design Squad**
9:00 **Charlie Rose: The Week**
9:30 **Religion & Ethics Newsweekly**
10:00 **Washington Week**
10:30 **Start Up**
11:00 **Consuelo Mack WealthTrack**
11:30 **To the Contrary**
12:00 **The McLaughlin Group**
12:30 **All Things Connecticut**
Part 6 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
1:00 **The Real Bob Steele**
The life and career of radio broadcaster Bob Steele, who brightened the mornings of Connecticut listeners for more than 66 years, are traced.
1:30 **Queen Victoria's Children**
A Domestic Tyrant (See February 14 at 8 p.m.)
2:30 **Queen Victoria's Children**
Princes Will Be Princes (See February 14 at 8 p.m.)
3:30 **American Woodshop**
4:00 **Woodsmith Shop**
4:30 **Hometime**
5:00 **Ask This Old House**
5:30 **This Old House**
6:00 **Death in Paradise**
(See February 12 at 9:30 p.m.)
7:00 **Father Brown**
The Daughters of Jerusalem (See February 12 at 8:30 p.m.)
8:00 **Call the Midwife**
The midwives discover that a young woman with Down syndrome is pregnant. Part 5 of 8.
9:00 **Masterpiece Classic**
Downton Abbey, Season 5 Mary finally shakes a suitor; Isobel and Lord Merton reveal their plans; and will Edith be found out? Part 7 of 9.
10:00 **Masterpiece Mystery!**
Grantchester Sidney and Geordie happen upon a murder while visiting London. Part 5 of 6.
11:00 **Midsomer Murders**
Faithful Unto Death Part 1 of 2. (See February 13 at 8 p.m.)
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

The Italian Americans
Tuesdays, February 17 and 24 at 9 p.m.

Trace the evolution of Italian Americans from the late 19th century to today, with insights from Tony Bennett, John Turturro, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and others. Once "outsiders" viewed with suspicion and mistrust, Italian Americans are now some of the most prominent leaders of U.S. business, politics and the arts. This new four-hour series peels away myths and stereotypes to reveal a world uniquely Italian and uniquely American. Acclaimed actor Stanley Tucci narrates.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16

8:00 **Antiques Roadshow**
Bismarck, North Dakota, Part 1 (See February 2 at 8 p.m.)
9:00 **Antiques Roadshow**
San Diego, California, Part 2
10:00 **The Blizzard of '78**
(See February 8 at 1 p.m.)
11:00 **Independent Lens**
Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People Learn how pioneering African American photographers have recorded the lives and aspirations of generations.
(12:30 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

8:00 Genealogy Roadshow
Philadelphia — Historical Society of Pennsylvania (See February 3 at 8 p.m.)

9:00 The Italian Americans
La Famiglia (1890-1910)/ Becoming Americans (1910-1930) (See *Highlight,* page 76.)

11:00 Sisters: New Haven Preserves Its Old World Heritage
This film explores the influence of Italian immigrants — particularly those from the town of Amalfi — who arrived in New Haven, Connecticut, at the turn of the century.

(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

8:00 Nature
Owl Power How owls hunt and how they fly so silently are influencing 21st-century technology and design.

9:00 NOVA
Building Wonders: Petra — Lost City of Stone (See *Highlight,* page 74.)

10:00 EARTH A New Wild
Oceans (See *Feature,* page 73.)

11:00 Nature
Salmon: Running the Gauntlet Collapsing Pacific salmon populations and the experiments conducted to save them are investigated.

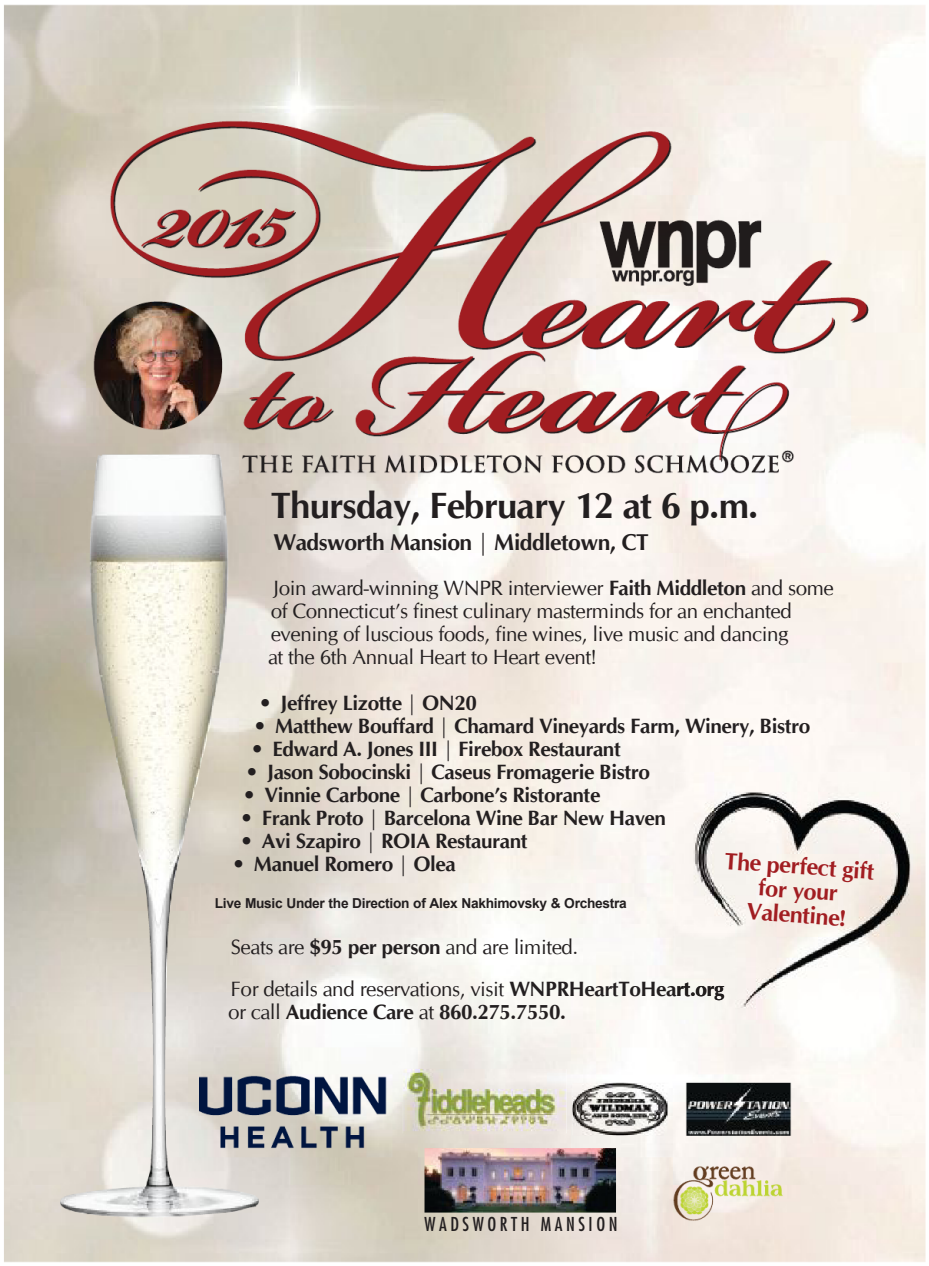
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

8:00 All Things Connecticut
Part 7 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)

8:30 Father Brown
The Three Tools of Death Father Brown attempts to help a young woman whose father is killed just weeks after her mother's death.

9:30 Death in Paradise
The team is introduced to a jet-setting world while investigating the murder of a flight attendant.


2015
Heart to Heart
wnpr
wnpr.org
THE FAITH MIDDLETON FOOD SCHMOOZE®
Thursday, February 12 at 6 p.m.
Wadsworth Mansion | Middletown, CT
Join award-winning WNPR interviewer Faith Middleton and some of Connecticut's finest culinary masterminds for an enchanted evening of luscious foods, fine wines, live music and dancing at the 6th Annual Heart to Heart event!
• Jeffrey Lizotte | ON20
• Matthew Bouffard | Chamard Vineyards Farm, Winery, Bistro
• Edward A. Jones III | Firebox Restaurant
• Jason Sobocinski | Caseus Fromagerie Bistro
• Vinnie Carbone | Carbone's Ristorante
• Frank Proto | Barcelona Wine Bar New Haven
• Avi Szapiro | ROIA Restaurant
• Manuel Romero | Olea
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MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL

10:30 Midsomer Murders
Faithful Unto Death Part 1 of 2. (See February 13 at 8 p.m.)
11:30 This Old House
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

8:00 Midsomer Murders
Faithful Unto Death Part 2 of 2. (See February 13 at 8 p.m.)
9:00 Masterpiece Mystery!
Inspector Lewis, Season 7: The Lions of Nemea The detectives discover murky motives while investigating the murder a student.
10:30 Scott & Bailey
Rachel and the team investigate the racially motivated murder of a young taxi driver.
11:30 Bluegrass Underground
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

6:30 am The Cookie Thief
(See *CPTV Kids Pick*, page 72.)
7:30 Thomas & Friends
8:00 Word World
8:30 Biz Kid$
9:00 Everyday Edisons
9:30 Getting Away Together
10:00 Rick Steves' Europe
10:30 All Things Connecticut
Part 7 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
11:00 Connecticut's Cultural Treasures
Mission: Cultural Awareness (See February 14 at 11 a.m.)
11:30 This Old House Hour
12:30 Growing a Greener World
1:00 The Great British Baking Show
Advanced Dough (See February 7 at 1 p.m.)
2:00 America's Test Kitchen
2:30 Cook's Country Kitchen
3:00 Martha Stewart's Cooking School
3:30 Martha Bakes
4:00 Jacques Pepin: More Fast Food My Way
4:30 Simply Ming
5:00 Lidia's Kitchen
5:30 A Moveable Feast
6:00 Hometime
6:30 Ask This Old House
7:00 This Old House
7:30 Jay Leno: The Mark Twain Prize
Jimmy Fallon, Jerry Seinfeld and other entertainers salute former *Tonight Show* host, comedian and performer Jay Leno.
9:00 Richard Pryor: Icon
The profound and enduring influence of one of the greatest American comics of all time is explored.
10:00 Robin Williams Remembered — A *Pioneers of Television* Special
This tribute to actor and comedian Robin Williams features one of his last full-length interviews.
11:00 Pioneers of Television
Standup to Sitcom Jerry Seinfeld, Roseanne Barr and others discuss how they transitioned from standup comedy to the world of sitcoms.
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

6:30 am Angelina Ballerina: The Next Steps
7:00 Curious George
7:30 The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!
8:00 Signing Time
8:30 Design Squad
9:00 Charlie Rose: The Week
9:30 Religion & Ethics Newsweekly
10:00 Washington Week
10:30 Start Up
11:00 Consuelo Mack WealthTrack
11:30 To the Contrary
12:00 The McLaughlin Group
12:30 All Things Connecticut
Part 7 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
1:00 American Masters
August Wilson: The Ground on Which I Stand The legacy of August Wilson, from his activist roots to his work on Broadway, is explored.
2:30 Independent Lens
Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People (See February 16 at 11 p.m.)
4:00 Woodsmith Shop
4:30 Hometime
5:00 Ask This Old House
5:30 This Old House
6:00 Death in Paradise
(See February 19 at 9:30 p.m.)
7:00 Father Brown
The Three Tools of Death (See February 19 at 8:30 p.m.)
8:00 Call the Midwife
Shelagh decides to talk to Dr. Turner about adopting a baby; Patsy tries to adapt to midwifery. Part 6 of 8.
9:00 Masterpiece Classic
Downton Abbey, Season 5
Someone tries to derail Rose and Atticus' happiness, and Mrs. Patmore gets a surprise. Part 8 of 9.
10:15 Masterpiece Mystery!
Grantchester Sidney encounters resistance when investigating a tragedy. Part 6 of 6.
11:15 Midsomer Murders
Faithful Unto Death Part 2 of 2. (See February 13 at 8 p.m.)
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

8:00 Antiques Roadshow
Bismarck, North Dakota, Part 2 (See February 2 at 8 p.m.)
9:00 Antiques Roadshow
San Diego, California, Part 3
10:00 New England and the Civil War
Archival photographs and footage of reenactments are used to explore the difficult years of the Civil War from a New England perspective.
11:30 The Education of Harvey Gantt
The story of the first African American accepted to a white college in South Carolina is showcased.
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

8:00 Genealogy Roadshow
St. Louis — Union Station (See February 3 at 8 p.m.)
9:00 The Italian Americans
Loyal Americans (1930-1945)/ The American Dream (1945-Present) (See *Highlight*, page 76.)
11:00 Genealogy Roadshow
The Best of Genealogy Roadshow (See February 3 at 8 p.m.)
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

8:00 Nature
The Last Orangutan Eden The work being done to save wild orangutans in Sumatra is documented.
9:00 NOVA
Building Wonders: Hagia Sophia — Istanbul's Ancient Mystery (See *Highlight*, page 74.)
10:00 EARTH A New Wild
Water (See *Feature*, page 73.)
11:00 Connecticut River: Journey Through Time
Get an in-depth look at the Connecticut River's role in shaping New England's history.
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

8:00 All Things Connecticut
Part 8 of 10. (See *All Things Connecticut*, page 79.)
8:30 Father Brown
The Prize of Colonel Gerard
Father Brown has his doubts when a recently returned prisoner of war is suspected of killing his uncle.
9:30 Death in Paradise
Saint-Marie's commerce minister is discovered dead.
10:30 Midsomer Murders
Faithful Unto Death Part 2 of 2. (See February 13 at 8 p.m.)
11:30 This Old House
(12 am - 7 am: CPTV All Night)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

8:00 Midsomer Murders
Death in Disguise One of the founders of a new-age commune is murdered. Part 1 of 2.
9:00 Midsomer Murders
Death in Disguise Part 2 of 2. (See February 27 at 8 p.m.)
10:00 Scott & Bailey (Back-to-Back Episodes)
Catch two episodes of *Scott & Bailey*, one right after the other. First, a murdered woman is discovered with her head covered in a green substance. Then, a suspected gang killing raises suspicions when the team learns new information.
11:35 Bluegrass Underground
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

6:30 am -- 8:00 pm: Viewers' Favorites
CPTV airs a day of special presentations of its most popular educational specials, concert events and more.
8:00 Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever (My Music)
(See *Program Picks*, page 72.)
10:00 pm -- Midnight: Viewers' Favorites
Relax and end the day with entertaining and inspiring specials.
(12 am - 6:30 am: CPTV All Night)

ALL THINGS CONNECTICUT

Pictured from top: David, front right, "breaks bread" with Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra, front left, at Hartford's Costa del Sol Restaurant; the dance company Pilobolus, featured in "Spotlight on the Arts," performs "Licks" (photo by Grant Halverson); Christina DeFranco, left, talks with Reginald Gambordella on the production floor of Curtis Packaging in Sandy Hook in "Made in Connecticut."

Your Mission: Explore *All Things Connecticut* — with New Host David Bibbey

Tune in Thursdays at 8 p.m. on CPTV

(Encore Broadcasts Air Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. and Sundays at 12:30 p.m.)

Catch new episodes of *All Things Connecticut* featuring new host David Bibbey, a Brit who's a "nut" for the Nutmeg State, so how appropriate that a drone called Meg should be dispatched by CPTV to deliver him a new mission each week! David is ready to accept each mission, going to great — and sometimes zany — lengths to uncover what makes Connecticut such a unique place.

In addition to David's adventuresome antics, featured segments include "Spotlight on the Arts" with Ed Wierzbicki; "Made in Connecticut" with Christina DeFranco; and "Breaking Bread," a new segment in which David takes a delicious tour of Connecticut's diverse food scene!

For more information, or to join the conversation on David's blog, visit AllThingsCT.org.

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The Double Life—and Dealings—of Philip Musica

HOW ONE MAN FOOLED THOUSANDS AND POCKETED MILLIONS.

F. Donald Coster/Philip Musica, shortly after his arrest.

When it comes to duplicitous dealings and ripping off investors, the name Bernie Madoff may now immediately come to mind, but in 1938 the headlines in Connecticut—and across the nation—were consumed with the sensational scandal at the multimillion-dollar Fairfield corporation McKesson & Robbins, and in particular, the downfall of its CEO, F. Donald Coster. As it turns out, Coster was an imposter, a con man who used multiple identities to mastermind one of the largest financial scams of the 20th century.

How Coster—or Philip Musica, as he was born—lied, cheated and repeatedly reinvented himself is a remarkable story.

Long before he would assume the identity of a "respectable" resident of Connecticut's Gold Coast, Philip Musica was born in 1877 in Naples, Italy. His family immigrated to the United States in 1880, settling in the Little Italy district of Manhattan. His father Antonio opened a small grocery store where he would directly import specialty products—cheese, olive oil, pasta, etc. By cutting out wholesalers, he sold his items for lower prices than other shops.

Musica quit school at 14 to join the family business, and within a few years, decided that the honest profits from simply undercutting the competition wasn't enough. Taking advantage of New York City's notoriously corrupt waterfront, he began to bribe dock officials, soon making the Musicas one of the largest importers in the city. In 1909, however, he was arrested on bribery charges and sentenced to a year in prison.

Following his release, Musica formed the United States Hair Co., an enterprise that allegedly imported high-quality human hair from Europe, which was popular for hairpieces and selling for as much as $80 per pound. What he really was doing was peddling worthless cuttings from barbershop floors; nonetheless, he was able to borrow $1 million from investors, of which he was able to illegally divert nearly $600,000 to his own accounts. He managed to take the company public, becoming a millionaire when shares reached $10 each. But like before, Musica's false dealings—and hair—were exposed. He was sent back to prison, served three years and was released in 1916.

With a new lease on life, Musica decided to get into a new business—bootlegging—and created a new persona to do it: Frank D. Costa.

Musica/Costa formed a company that specialized in creating "medicinal" products such as hair tonic and cosmetics that were artificially high in alcohol content. He sold these legally manufactured products to other bootleggers, who would then distill out the alcohol for use in creating illegal liquor. The venture ultimately fell apart, but it set the stage for Musica to now become F. Donald Coster.

Coster took his new bootlegging to the suburbs, setting up another "pharmaceutical" enterprise, Girard & Co., in Mount Vernon, N.Y. By 1926, he was able to acquire McKesson & Robbins, a 105-year-old pharmaceutical company with a respected name. He quietly moved the entire operation to Fairfield in 1925, and bought a stately, 18-room mansion for himself and his wife.

This time, Coster's scheme was more involved. In addition to using the legitimate McKesson & Robbins to camouflage bootlegging, he was essentially able to set up false subsidiaries and outside vendors that he "sold" products to but were really involved in skimming substantial profits for the Musica family. Through shady and complicated accounting maneuvers that presented the appearance of strong sales, he was also able to attract investors, whose pockets he fleeced.

For all his chicanery, the "reclusive" Coster—he maintained a low public profile for obvious reasons—did have some true financial acumen. He grew McKesson & Robbins enormously, even brokering a megadeal to acquire 66 other wholesale drug companies.

The stock market crash in October 1929 put a damper on corporate growth, with Coster personally losing an estimated $1 million, but he seemed to be living well. He bought a 133-foot yacht for $125,000 (well over $1.5 million today) as well as racehorses and expensive cars. He also played the part of upstanding community member, founding a cardiac clinic for the poor in Bridgeport and donating to charitable causes.

In the 12 years Coster was based in Connecticut, he made McKesson & Robbins an economic force, employing hundreds in 35 states and seemingly withstanding the Great Depression. By 1937, McKesson & Robbins was the third-largest drug company in the world, claiming annual sales of $174 million, profits of $4 million and assets of $87 million.

Such achievements attracted national attention for Coster. In December 1937, leaders of the Republican Party even courted him to make a run for the presidency against Franklin D. Roosevelt. The "publicity-shy" CEO, however, politely declined.

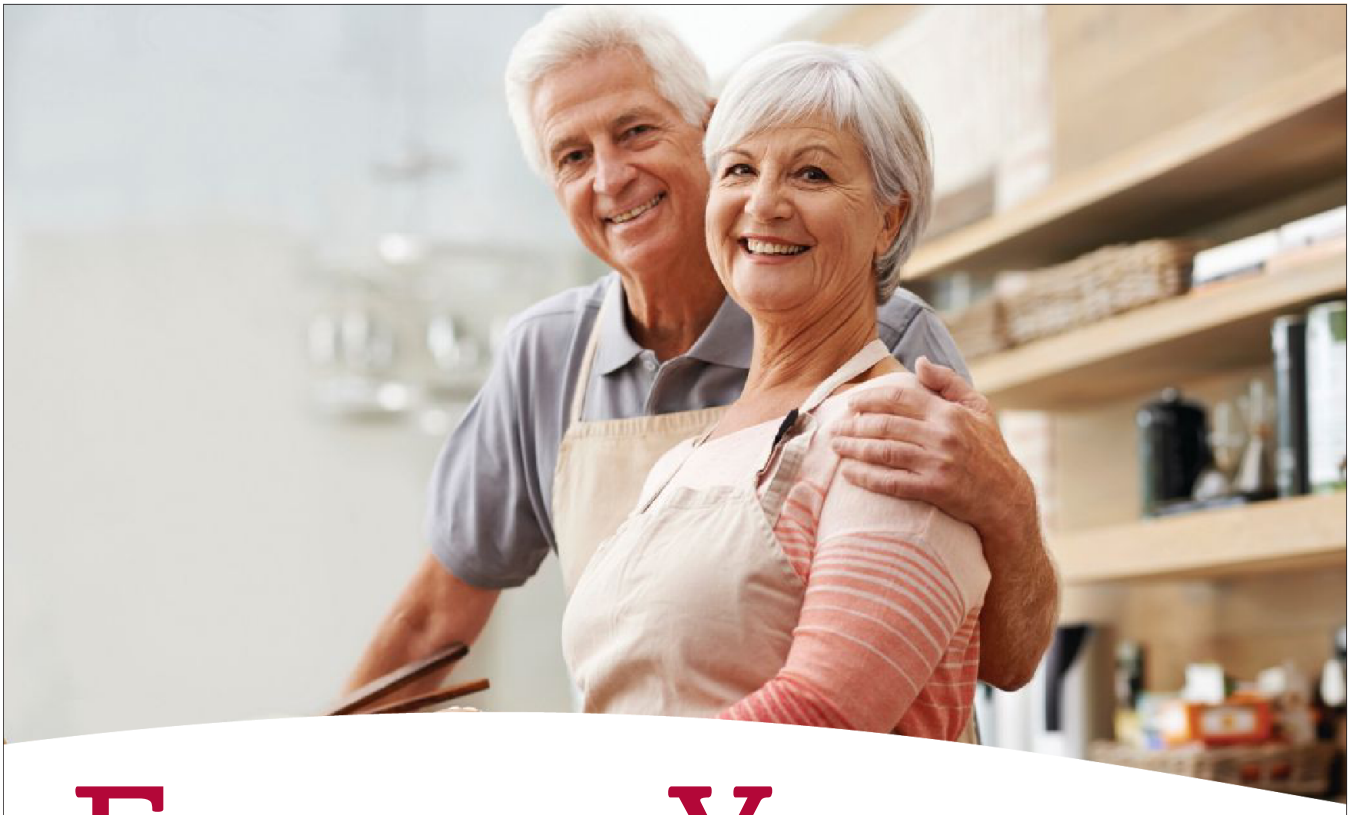
For all of its honest success, McKesson & Robbins had been compromised by years of Coster's behind-the-scenes shenanigans. When the books began to not add up, internal auditors started to question the corporation's finances. In November 1938, Coster's web of lies, fraudulent billing practices, phony sales and illegally diverted funds were exposed.

The Securities and Exchange Commission soon announced it was launching a formal investigation, causing the company's stock to plummet. The scandal made national headlines, complete with pictures of the company's disgraced CEO, F. Donald Coster. He was quickly recognized by New York police as Philip Musica, two-time convicted felon.

On Dec. 16, federal authorities descended upon the Coster mansion. Before he could be taken in, however, F. Donald Coster/Philip Musica locked himself in his bathroom and shot himself dead with a .38-caliber revolver.

In addition to a stunning scandal where it was later determined that some $3.2 million was missing from McKesson & Robbins, Musica left a four-page suicide note, in which he wrote: "As God is my judge, I am the victim of Wall Street plunder and blackmail in a struggle for honest existence . . . Oh merciful God, bring the truth to light . . ."

The truth was in the light—as now is Philip Musica's story. | R.B. |



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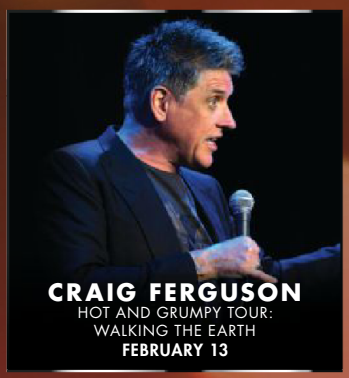

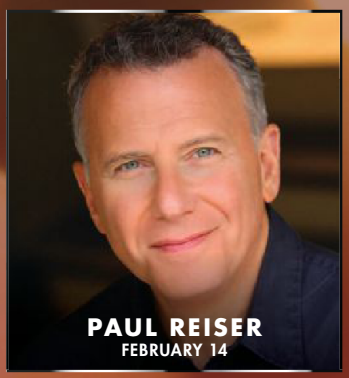

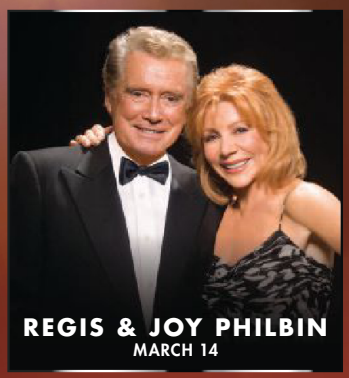

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